HALESOWEN
CHRONICLE

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X-MAS STAR

Wagner meets his fans at big switch-on



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FRESH ROLE

Actor shoots historic drama at museum



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DINNER MONEY BID BY SCHOOLS

TWO schools struggling to provide meals without disrupting lessons are bidding for £450,000 to bring kitchen and dining facilities up to scratch.

Lutley Primary School in Halesowen and Netherton C of E Primary School are both looking to secure cash for the work. Education bosses said both schools are having to run 'excessively long' lunch hours.

By Heather Large

A new dining hall will be created at Lutley Primary, which will free up the main hall, currently being used at lunch time, for PE lessons.

Grant

The school is applying for a grant of £230,000 from the Department for Education.

Netherton CE Primary is applying for £220,000 to install a new kitchen. Bosses say it will end the need for all meals to be brought into school through a teaching area.

Dudley's children's services boss Councillor Tim Crumpton said: "We have two schools who are unable to deliver the free school meal initiative without significant disruption to the school day."

"The bid will be submitted to request total capital funding of £450,000.

"£230,000 of the capital funding will be used to provide a new dining hall at Lutley Primary School to enable delivery of hot meals and reduce disruption to the school curriculum.

"The bid will also be submitted to request £220,000 capital funding to install a new kitchen at Netherton C of E Primary school to ensure that hot meals can be provided on site reducing disruption to the school curriculum and resolving health and safety issues," he added.

Since September all infant children have been entitled to free meals.

Almost 60 jobs have been created across the borough as part of the scheme.

Dudley Council received £855,000 from the Government to enable it to carry out work needed ahead of the scheme being launched in the borough.

In total 59 catering staff were recruited to provide more than 13,200 meals per day.

The council said an additional 191 hours needed to be covered to provide free meals.

The Government provided £1 billion to meet the costs of providing the meals across the UK, which are available to all pupils without means-testing, over the next two years.

A total of £150 million was made available to improve school kitchens and dining facilities with an additional £22.5 million specifically to help smaller schools.

It is also hoped that the availability of healthy free meals will help reduce the obesity problem with about 20 per cent of children currently classed as obese by the time they leave primary school.

Gate opened to town's secret garden



Project begins — Carole Freer opens the doors to the historic walled garden in Halesowen

WELCOME to the secret garden with this sneak peek inside an 18th century walled garden in Halesowen that is to be restored to its historic glory.

Community leaders have opened the gates to the walled garden at Leasowes Park as they prepare to start work on a £500,000 restoration.

Members of Halesowen Abbey Trust have purchased the Grade I listed walled garden at the park and plan to restore it and open it to the public.

Vandals

The group had anticipated they would be the first people to enter the brick walls in nearly two years but discovered they had been beaten to it by vandals.

Mick Freer, who headed the purchase of the garden from Birmingham Metropolitan College, said: "In the first place we couldn't even get into the garden as the vandals had tried to barricade us out. They has used anything they could lay their hands on to try and jam the door.

"When we finally got in I was dismayed to see the extent of the vandalism. Panes had been knocked out the greenhouses, they had smashed the glass and there was evidence of fires."

Despite the setback, Mr Freer still sees huge potential in the garden. He added: "This is a massively exciting project and probably the most exciting to hit Halesowen in 50 years."

Decision to select leader is imminent

THE proposed new leader of Dudley Council will be announced at a meeting tonight (Thursday).

The borough's controlling Labour group is meeting to discuss a successor for Councillor David Sparks.

Whoever takes on the job of Labour group leader will also be put forward as the next leader of the local authority.

Councillor Sparks announced his intention to step down from his role leading the party and the authority last week.

Focus

The controlling group plan to select a new leader after Councillor Sparks formally stands aside at the meeting.

Nomnations have already been coming in ahead of the meeting taking place on Thursday evening.

Councillor Sparks was planning to relinquish his position as council leader at a meeting at Dudley Council House on Monday.

The Labour party, which have a majority in the council chamber, will then nominate its leader to head up the authority.

Councillor Sparks is giving up the role to focus his time as chairman of national body the Local Government Association.

Lenny lends voice to zoo

DUDLEY'S Lenny Henry has recorded a 'voice over' for a film to be screened at a £250,000 new attraction at Dudley Zoo.

A documentary is being created on the history of the zoo and its Tecton enclosures dating back to the 1930s.

It will be showcased when the zoo's new Tecton Interpretation Centre opens in the spring, featuring the dulcet Dudley tones of the popular actor and comedian who was made a Freeman of the borough last year.

Calls from family lead to review of killing

A FRESH inquiry will be held in the wake of the killing of Halesowen schoolgirl Christina Edkins.

NHS England confirmed a far-reaching review will take place following calls from the family of the 16-year-old, who was stabbed to death by paranoid schizophrenic Phillip Simelane on a bus in Birmingham while on her way to school.

An initial inquiry by Birmingham Cross City Clinical Commissioning Group said Christina's death could have been prevented after it emerged Simelane had been released from prison with no supervision only months before the attack.

The family called for the full facts and those responsible for failings to be identified.

Halesowen and Rowley Regis MP James Morris said a national inquiry would add 'more teeth' to demands for improvement.

NHS England say a fresh inquiry would be held after the Leasowes High School pupil's family wrote to them.

A spokesman said: "NHS England can confirm that a letter has been received and subsequently a decision has been made for a further review."

Simelane was detained indefinitely in a psychiatric hospital.

1,000 sign MP's petition

MORE than 1,000 people have put their name to a petition opposing plans to close Dudley Police Station to the public.

Under the proposal by West Midlands Police, the front counters at the stations in Halesowen and Stourbridge will also shut.

Dudley North MP Ian Austin started a petition, both paper and online, urging police bosses to rethink the proposal.

■ Counter cuts — see page 12

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CONTACT US

Have you got a story or an event you want covered? The Chronicle and Express & Star have a team of reporters covering Halesowen who can help:

Heather Large: 01384 353203
heather.large@expressandstar.co.uk
Alex Ross: 01384 353207
alex-ross@expressandstar.co.uk
Andrew Turton: 01384 353202
andrew.turton@expressandstar.co.uk
Lee Watton: 01384 353230
lee.watton@expressandstar.co.uk
Tom Mason: 01902 319550
tom.mason@expressandstar.co.uk
Katy-Rose Meaney: 01384 353201
katy.meaney@expressandstar.co.uk

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Sports:
Tel: 01902 319453. e-mail: chronsport@expressandstar.co.uk

Photographic
Tel: John Sambrooks 01902 319431

Advertising
Nicky Cope
01902 319573
Email nicola.cope@expressandstar.co.uk

Motoring:
Liz Barratt
Tel: 01384 353244
E-mail: liz.barratt@expressandstar.co.uk

Distribution:
Paul Jones
Tel: 01902 319990
E-mail: p.jones@expressandstar.co.uk

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'Outrage' over fewer court cases

THE total number of cases heard by magistrates' courts in the Black Country and Staffordshire has fallen by more than 26 per cent in four years, figures reveal.

Courts dealt with 70,537 cases in 2013/14 compared with 95,439 in 2010/11.

National figures show that courts across England and Wales heard 2.8 million cases last year, nearly a million less than in 2010. The figures were uncovered by Dudley North MP Ian Austin.

He said he is concerned by the statistics. Last year the Labour MP led a successful campaign to save Dudley Magistrates' Court from closure.

"We already know that a million crimes are not being recorded, the number of police is down by 13,000 and now these figures show that the number of cases taken to court is down by a quarter," he said.

"When I was fighting to save Dudley's local court from closure, magistrates told me police are dealing with serious cases, including domestic violence and rape, out of court. I think people will be outraged.

"Like me they want more police on the streets, more offenders going to court and more criminals being put in jail."

The figures show the number of cases heard at Dudley during four years dropped from 15,552 to 10,502 — a reduction of around 32 per cent.

In 2010/11 a total of 98 courts shut down across the country, including Halesowen and West Bromwich Magistrates courts and Stourbridge county court.

Trust wants to care for more with dementia

A RESIDENTIAL care home in Rowley Regis could for 19 more people than first envisaged and create up to 50 jobs, in revised plans.

Sandwell Community Caring Trust already has permission to build a 62-bed home off Harvest Road in Rowley Regis. But due to lack of other providers in the area they are seeking to amend the proposals to accommodate 81 adults.

Bosses at the charity say the scheme will give priority to older people with dementia living in the area.

The home will have a total of around 80 staff with 30 moving from the charity's care home in Grafton road, Oldbury, which is being replaced.

The site, at the junction of Dudhill Road, was previously occupied by Knowle House old people's home, which has been demolished.

The proposals for the two-storey building include a secure central courtyard, gated entrances and parking for staff and visitors.

Sandwell Councillor Susan Eaves welcomed the application, saying: "To my knowledge we haven't got any other provision in the area, so it is really needed.

"When Knowle House, which used to be on the site, closed down all the residents had to go elsewhere.

"This should really help the area."

Sandwell Community Caring Trust was formed in 2007 to provide services across the Black Country and supports more than 600 clients. This includes adults living with physical and learning disabilities, residential care and day care for older people and respite care for physically disabled adults.

Geoff Walker, Chief Executive of Sandwell Community Caring trust, said: "This project will bring huge benefits to the local community down in the south of Sandwell."

Jewellers to mark 25 years trading

A JEWELLERY shop in Halesowen is preparing to mark its 25th anniversary with an event this weekend

T H Baker jewellers, based in The Cornbow Shopping Centre, is marking the milestone on Saturday with its own birthday celebration.

There will be cupcakes and gifts for customers on the day.

There will also be special offers for customers who will receive a £5 gift card when they spend £50 or more.

Success

Co-director Phillip Higgs said: "Our 25th Birthday celebration is a tribute to what we have achieved, and a celebration of our success in the last 25 years.

"We would like to thank the loyal support we receive from our customers in the town.

"We are certainly looking forward to what the next 25 years bring for us, and hope we continue to be the go to jewellery retailer in Halesowen."

T H Baker is a family-owned jewellery retailer business that was established on Brierley Hill High Street in 1888.

School's tribute with poppies



Year 11 pupils Courtney Ward and Leo Horton-Taylor with poppies at Leasowes High School

PUPILS at a Halesowen school were inspired by the Tower of London poppy art installation to commemorate the centenary of the start of the First World War.

Staff and pupils of Leasowes High School created their own memorial display in the school reception.

Each pupil and member of staff was provided with their own poppy and asked to write a message, prayer, poem or thought onto it, to pay their respects to those who gave their lives for their country.

Pupils then took their poppies into their year group assembly, where they had a few minutes of quiet reflection before the poppies were added to the growing display. The display built up to approximately 1,000 poppies over four days.

Deputy Head Girl Emily Withers said "The poppies really look wonderful and represent the feelings of thanks that young people at this school wish to convey to the soldiers who fought for our country so bravely."

Legal bid to tackle boy racers in court

A BID to secure a High Court injunction to tackle boy racers across the Black Country is due back before the courts next month.

West Midlands Police and Dudley, Wolverhampton, Walsall and Sandwell councils are seeking the High Court injunction.

The Black Country Route in Bilston and Moxley, Birmingham New Road on the border of Wolverhampton and Dudley, and Maybrook Industrial Estate in Brownhills have all been hotspots for the car cruisers.

Prison

The order would involve anyone suspected of breaching the ban being held in contempt of court, which can result in a sentence of up to two years in prison.

Police would also have their powers to convict motorists of offences such as driving without insurance, driving an unroadworthy vehicle or driving without due care and attention.

Police said the High Court injunction application will be heard again in court in December.

The process had started in the courts in September.

Officers said they would continue with patrols in those areas.

Unique card opportunity

FAMILIES have an opportunity to make their own unique Christmas card at a Christmas fair to be held at Overend Methodist Mission in Banner's Lane, Cradley on Saturday.

A photographer will be on hand with traditional nativity costumes and backgrounds to make quality individual cards at a cost of £3.

The fair will run from 11am until 2pm and entry is free.

Seasonal lunches, including hot turkey baps, will be available, and there will be stalls.

Speeders clocked

MORE than one in five drivers were caught speeding during a police operation in Halesowen.

Officers carried out the speed check for more than an hour in Hawne Lane in Belle Vale. Out of 58 vehicles 13 were found to be breaking the 30mph limit.

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Probe into death of man, 28, on a bus

THE Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) is to investigate the actions of officers after a Dudley man died on a bus in Wolverhampton

The IPCC is looking into the actions of police and a civilian staff member regarding the death of 28-year-old Tony Jones on a bus outside the city's main police station in the early evening of Friday, October 17.

The driver of the number one Dudley-to-Tettenhall service diverted the vehicle to the Bilston Street station due to concerns about Mr Jones, who is said to have collapsed on board.

IPCC spokesman Neil Coyte said at this stage investigators had established that the driver parked the bus outside and went in to request assistance to deal with the situation.

Mr Coyte said the driver returned to the counter at 6.36pm and ten minutes later he was joined by a passenger, and the bus driver called an ambulance.

Eyewitnesses say a female passenger came in shouting: "Help, help, he's not breathing."

Paramedics tried to resuscitate Mr Jones but he was declared dead at the scene.

NHS staff in pay walk-out

HUNDREDS of NHS staff across the West Midlands took to the picket lines in a row over pay.

Nurses, paramedics, porters, admin assistants and support staff were among those that walked out for four hours on Monday in protest at a decision by the Government not to give them a recommended one per cent pay rise.

The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust said 68 members walked out. Sandwell & West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust said some surgical theatre sessions were delayed.

Flats refused

PLANS to build three flats have been blocked. The application was for a two-storey building at the rear of the former Victoria pub in Malt Mill Lane, Shell Corner. But Dudley Council decided it would not fit the character of the area and an access was too narrow.

Fresh negotiations possible over mosque site

A NEW search for a mosque site in Dudley looks set to begin after council bosses agreed to open talks with Muslim leaders.

Dudley Muslim Association is locked in a long battle with Dudley Council over a proposal for a mosque on land off Hall Street.

Earlier this month, the association won planning permission for the mosque.

But it faces at least two court hearings and legal wrangles lasting at least two years before it can be built.

In an attempt to avoid the escalating court costs and resolve community disharmony, Muslim leaders say they will consider alternative sites.

Unchanged

In response, council leader David Sparks has said he would welcome reopening negotiations, whilst confirming that the council's current legal position remained unchanged.

Five years ago, alternative options including Dudley Hippodrome and incorporating Castle Casino as part of an expansion plan for the existing mosque on Castle Hill both fell through.

Councillor Sparks said: "It is for the Dudley Muslim Association to come forward with alternative sites and then we can discuss them."

However, association director Dr Khurshid Ahmed said it was up to the council to come up with alternative locations, not the Dudley Muslim Association.

Mr Ahmed said: "I am very pleased to hear he is willing to talk to us because it is only by talking and constructive dialogue that we will put an end to the issue."

He added: "It is not for Dudley Muslim Association to come up with sites, the local authority is in a much better position.

"We have always been happy to talk to the council. We will accept a solution that meets our needs.

"But we have been given no viable alternative, so our only option has been to keep with the Hall Street scheme."

Concern at council youth club cuts to save money

YOUTH worker jobs will be axed and some services taken over by voluntary groups as part of a shake-up of youth centres.

Dudley Council wants to cut £200,000 from the youth service budget as part of wider plans for £27 million of savings.

The council currently employs 100 youth workers and runs seven centres, attended by thousands of youngsters across the borough. Although they have pledged not to close any centres at this stage, bosses want to reduce the amount of activity sessions and transfer them to voluntary and community groups.

By Heather Large

Union leaders fear the workforce could be reduced by 50 per cent under the plans. A consultation is now taking place with staff.

Councillor Tim Crumpton, cabinet member for children's services, said: "Due to the continued cuts in funding from national government Dudley Council is in a position of having to make some very difficult decisions.

"Services to our young people remain a priority but we have reached a stage with the lack of funding where we are having to be innovative and look at different ways to deliver services.

"Young people will still be able to access good quality services as the proposed model is based on harnessing the potential of the voluntary and community sector by working closer with them to deliver more services."

He added: "The youth service currently employs around 100 members of staff and the proposals would create savings of £200,000.

"I can assure young people and parents that providing good quality youth work remains at the heart of our plans, regardless of who is delivering the service."

Bob Sandall, who runs High Acres Woodcraft Folk, and has been involved in voluntary youth services in the borough for 47 years, said he was concerned by the proposals.

He said: "Youth centres are providing a place to meet and a safe haven. However good voluntary youth organisations are they cannot cater to the needs of all young people , the full-time youth service provides many alternatives."

The centres are at Halesowen, Lye, Wordsley, Gornal, Dudley, Russells Hall and Coseley.

Below average complaints

JUST over 400 complaints were lodged with Dudley Council over a six month spell. But the number of issues that people had with the local authority was less than the average amount received by other councils.

The authority received 405 complaints from April to October, the equivalent of 5.76 complaints per 10,000 people.

The average for comparable authorities is 9.87 complaints for every 10,000 people.



Wagner meets fans during the festive lights switch-on, pic by Terrence R Alliband

An X-tra special guest at switch-on

THE X Factor star Wagner returned to his musical roots with a performance for hundreds of people at the turn-on of the Christmas lights in Dudley and Blackheath.

The Dudley-based Brazilian who became a tattooist in the town after his stint on the TV show sang his new Christmas single Switched On Like A Christmas Tree at the events on Saturday

Fantastic

He appeared in Dudley town centre for the light turn-on at 5pm, then at Blackheath for the switch-on at 6pm.

He was joined in Dudley by dance act Granny Turismo, who entertained the crowds with their routines featuring shopping trollies.

Mayor of Dudley Councillor Margaret Aston, said: "The turn-out was fantastic.

"The performers gave it their all and I'd like to thank them for the contribution they made to the day.

"It was a real privilege to turn on the lights for the people of Dudley and I wish everyone a happy start to the festive season."

In Blackheath, Wagner joined Sandwell Mayor, Councillor Derek Rowley, to turn on the lights.

NEWS IN BRIEF

New menswear store at Merry Hill

A FASHION retailer will open a new store for men at Merry Hill shopping centre, creating 12 jobs.

London-based menswear store Open will welcome shoppers to its latest branch from Saturday.

Bosses say the store will celebrate the opening with a special event including free coffee and doughnuts for shoppers.

Open managing director Stephen Galea said: "We aim to deliver a simple no-nonsense approach to menswear."

Based in Barking, Open was founded in 2013.

Traditional festive skills at museum

BLACK Country Living Museum will be hosting a series of workshops showing how Christmas decorations and delicacies were made at the turn of the century.

Demonstrations will take place on how to make traditional decorations and items such as pomanders that give a festive scent.

Workshops take place at the venue on Tipton Road this weekend, then on December 6 and 7, 13 and 14, 20 and 21 and 27 and 28. No pre-booking is required.

Old Hill to get lit up for the season

A CHRISTMAS lights turn-on will take place in Old Hill, near Halesowen, on Saturday

The event will be at the Holy Trinity Church, and will start from 3.30pm.

There will be children's fair rides, face painting and a variety of gift stalls as part of the event.

Cradley Heath Salvation Army Band will also perform. The lights will be turned on at 5pm.

Foundry has won an industry award

A BLACK Country foundry was among the winners in the Cast Metals Federation's annual awards.

Thomas Dudley received the company achievement award. Joint managing director Martin Dudley was presented with the accolade. The foundry in Birmingham New Road has invested £50,000 to create a new visitor centre.

Vehicle crackdown

MORE than 130 foreign vehicles have been seized in the Midlands during first weeks of a pilot project clamping down on overseas drivers flouting UK road rules. The pilot scheme runs until February.

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THE BEST OF PETER RHODES



I LOVE this email: "Receive an envelope from the NHS today containing two letters. One confirmed a hospital appointment. The other cancelled it. This is factual. I'm not clever enough to make this stuff up."

I HAVE an explanation for the curious case of the reader whose smartphone suddenly produced a text message from an optician shortly after she walked past the premises. It is something called proximity marketing. But all the descriptions I have seen stress that users have to opt-in to the system in order to receive messages. You don't recall opting-in? I would hazard a guess that it was somewhere in the terms and conditions, that vast mass of legal bumf that nobody ever bothers to read. In fact, let's have a National T&C Day when everybody refuses to sign up to anything on the internet without first thoroughly reading every single paragraph of the terms and conditions. The system would crash.

THE tear-jerking Sainsbury's yuletide advert, set in the Christmas Truce of 1914, has obviously been working its sentimental magic. A contributor to one of the national newspapers implores us: "Should we not have compassion for the thousands of German soldiers, also sons, fathers and brothers?" I can see why someone might want to extend remembrance to the amiable, photogenic young German soldiers in the Sainsbury's ad. But what about their comrades who ransacked the Belgian city of Louvain, torched its priceless medieval library and executed hundreds of civilians, including women and children? Do they, too, deserve a place in our hearts and a chunk of our Sainsbury chocolate? And what about Hitler's death squads, or today's enemy, the Taliban and their fellow beheaders, the Islamic State? Are they all to be remembered with compassion, too? If not, why not? The moment we start extending compassion to all our enemies is the moment we put our soldiers on the same moral level as Jihadi John. Not in my name, thanks.

Don't miss Peter Rhodes every Monday to Friday in your Express & Star

Campaigners updated on plans for shops

CAMPAIGNERS were this week being updated on plans for the redevelopment of arson-hit shops in Colley Gate.

Dudley Council has been considering four bids to transform the rundown shopping parade after complaints that the row of seven empty shops are a magnet for vandals.

Members of the Cradley Action Group were yesterday (Wednesday) hearing the latest on the proposals, which are believed to include plans for a supermarket.

Cradley Action Group co-founder Richard Legiewizc said: "We've been campaigning for this for a long time. The row of shops are an eyesore so it will be good to see something positive done at last.

"We will be pleased to see as many people as possible who want to hear the latest on these plans."

In June, council workers were forced to board up the shops after they were targeted by arsonists twice in two days.

In the first incident a dozen firefighters had to tackle a blaze at a lock-up behind the shops and in the second a man had to flee his home after a fire at the former Lucky Star takeaway.

Councillor Richard Body, member for Cradley and Wollescote, was among those who called for urgent action.

By Heather Large

The public meeting was being held last night at The Laurels in Windmill Hill.

Dudley Council officers have previously said they would seek to use compulsory purchase orders if deals were not secured for the future of the site.

But it has to first give the owners a chance to carry out the work themselves.

The council owns two plots of land at either end of the site, by the road junctions, whilst the rest is in private ownership.

Earlier this year, bosses invited firms to respond to development opportunity adverts for the site and proposals are being scrutinised before the preferred bidder is announced.

They will then seek deals to buy the shops before submitting redevelopment proposals to Dudley Council's planning department.

Two Days Late deliver debut



Black Country rock trio Two Days Late release new music

THEY'VE performed at venues across the region and now a Black Country band is hoping to attract a wider audience with the release of their first EP, entitled Sally.

Four piece indie band Two Days Late spent up to six months on the new tracks and are celebrating the release while also hoping to win a record contract as part of a national talent competition.

The EP has gone live on major music platforms including iTunes, Spotify and SoundCloud.

It consists of three original tracks — Sally (I Like The Way You Move), Jealousy and High — which were penned by the band.

The tracks were recorded in indie band The Twang's studios in Birmingham's Jewellery Quarter, by band members Dan Penn, aged 23, from Cradley Heath, Josh Owen, 24, from Halesowen, Steve Parsons, 24, of Stourbridge and Drew Saunders, 23, from Quinton.

The EP can now be bought on iTunes for £1.29 and heard via several other music platforms.

Facebook row led to knife incident

A MAN who went to a house armed with a knife after his girlfriend received nasty comments on Facebook had 'behaved like a child in a playground', a judge has said.

Mark Finch, aged 37, of Macmillan Road, Rowley Regis, appeared at Shrewsbury Crown Court where he was given a six-month prison sentence, suspended for two years.

He had admitted at an earlier hearing charges of harassment and affray and was found guilty of being in possession of a bladed article, incidents that stemmed from Facebook remarks.

Threats

Mr Kevin Jones said Finch made telephone calls in which threats of violence were made and then went to a house in Anderson Road, Smethwick, on July 6 last year, at which Damien Cray was believed to be staying. Finch brandished a knife in front of two women.

Judge Mark Eades said he conceded that no violence was involved. "The whole affair was puerile," he said. "It was an obsession about who said what to who.

"It is the sort of thing that happens with children in a playground, not people like you who are 37, becoming upset about what someone said to you or your girlfriend on Facebook."









MPs back new deal for pubs' tenants

PUB companies have warned that pub closures and job losses could result from changes to 'beer tie' deals for landlords — despite Dudley MPs backing a move to free pub tenants.

Chris Kelly, Conservative MP for Dudley South, was among 40 Tory and Liberal Democrat rebels who backed an amendment to the Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Bill – PM David Cameron's first defeat on a Government law since the Coalition formed.

It will mean pub tenants tied to companies being able to demand a 'market rent only' agreement. Currently, tied pubs exclusively buy alcohol products from the parent company in return for reduced rent and other benefits. There have been concerns about abuse of the practice by big pub firms.

But Britain's biggest pub landlord Solihull-based Enterprise Inns warned the vote could lead to more pub closures and job losses. The British Beer and Pub Association said the vote was 'hugely damaging' and Punch Taverns said: "We believe that the amendment would be likely to have the effect of reducing pub investment."

Dudley North MP Ian Austin said: "I've supported the Campaign for Real Ale's campaign for a 'Pubs Charter' from the start so landlords get a fair deal."

Plan for Muslim prayer hall at a former Sunday School

REVISED proposals have been revealed to transform a Victorian former Methodist chapel into a Muslim prayer hall and community centre.

Previous plans were thrown out over parking concerns. The former Sunday school and church building, based in Old Hill, off Halesowen Road, would be revamped under plans.

By Andrew Turton

Members of the Old Hill Masjid and Community Centre Association have re-submitted a planning application to convert the property into a prayer hall and community centre.

It comes after planners on Sandwell Council refused permission for the scheme claiming there was a 'shortfall' in the number of car parking spaces available.

Prayers

Officials behind the application said council representatives only had concerns for a 'very brief period' of the week around busy Friday prayers. They claimed this amounted to a shortfall of around 21 spaces.

Officials representing the association said they had been in talks with the council.

"Car parking provision has been made for 22 parking spaces — and two disabled — throughout the course of the week, when general attendance is low, with an additional eight temporary parking spaces for the period of time during Friday prayer," they said in a report.

"The clients have an arrangement with Platinum Plaza so that 18 car spaces are available on their car park during the afternoon Friday prayer."

"A visit to the town, found around 100 'on street' spaces and a further 135 spaces available on nearby car parks within a town centre that is capable of supporting many facilities simultaneously.

Bosses said the building, next to the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, would need a 'comprehensive refurbishment'. The building had been used at a martial arts centre but now stands empty.

A decision will be taken over the scheme in the coming weeks.

Severn Trent urged to fence off culvert



Councillor Hilary Bills next to the culvert in Hurst Green Park, with temporary fencing

ACTION has been taken to secure an open culvert in a Halesowen park, after fears people could fall into the water.

Severn Trent Water is carrying out work to protect nearby homes from flooding.

But the ditch was left unprotected, sparking concerns.

Dudley Council environment boss, Halesowen North Councillor Hilary Bills, said "We are speaking to Severn Trent about their ongoing work on the culvert and ensuring, once this work is complete, they will landscape it.

"We are aware of the issues with excess rain water running onto the site and are pressing the Highways Agency for a date when this will be sorted."

Severn Trent Water's Sarah-Jayne O'Kane said: "I can only apologise to the local community for the mess that has been left. Someone has now been out to site to secure the temporary fence."

She added that a purpose-made fence would be installed soon.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Fatal car crash suspect in hospital

A MAN arrested after a car crash which claimed the life of a driver remains in hospital undergoing treatment.

The accident happened on the A4123 Wolverhampton Road between Bleakhouse Road and Clent Road in Warley on Sunday morning.

A red Ford Ka collided with a blue VW Passat. The 25-year-old Ka driver, who has not yet been named, died at the scene.

Police said a 26-year-old was arrested on suspicion of death by dangerous driving after being detained at the scene by members of the public. He and a 24-year-old woman, who was a passenger in the Passat, were taken to hospital for treatment. Both are from Birmingham.

Baubles on store's tree to help charity

A STORE at Merry Hill shopping centre is raising money for vulnerable children by allowing shoppers to decorate its Christmas tree with baubles.

Customers at Homesense are able to buy a bauble for £1 on which to write their own festive message and hang on the store's tree.

All proceeds will go to Action for Children's centres in Smethwick and West Bromwich.

The campaign has been running for four years. Last year Homesense raised more than £75,000 for the Black Country charity's children's centres.

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IN MY VIEW



with Mark Andrews

IN THE nauseating new trailer for ITV's daytime schedule, Philip Schofield asks viewers what their phobias are.

I'm no expert on the subject. But I would imagine Gok Wan and Janet Street-Porter being dragged out of bed by Lorraine Kelly and told you need a makeover must all feature pretty highly.

❐❐❐❐

Twenty-seven police stations across the West Midlands are set to close their front counters over the next year in an effort to save £3m.

Under the plans, only just 10 will remain open, with only one of those remaining open round the clock.

For the first time in living memory, towns like Walsall and Dudley will have no police station where members of the public can walk in for help.

If you need to call into a police station in Wolverhampton or West Bromwich after 10pm, forget it.

Police and Crime Commissioner David Jamieson, says the front desks are a throwback from a bygone age, and that the world has moved on.

"Ninety-five per cent of people have mobile phones now, and can contact the police from anywhere," he says.

"Research shows that very few people are visiting front desks and prefer to phone the police or use the internet rather than go to a police station."

It really is hard to know where to start with all that.

I'm sure he's right most people would prefer to avoid calling into a police station unless they really have to.

Indeed I'm fairly sure, that in an ideal world, most of us would prefer never to need to have any dealings with the police at all. But it is nice to know they are there in case we need them.

If 95 per cent of the population has a mobile phone, that means five per cent don't have one.

What about them?

And, of course, contacting the police by phone these days invariably means being redirected to a call centre miles away.

And while 95 per cent may well have mobile phones, what happens when you have just been robbed of your phone in the city centre?

❐❐❐❐

And one other thing. Suppose you get pulled over by the police in your car, and they ask you to produce your documents the following day.

Will they be happy for you now to send them by text or email? Or will you now be expected to drive miles to find a police station which is still open?

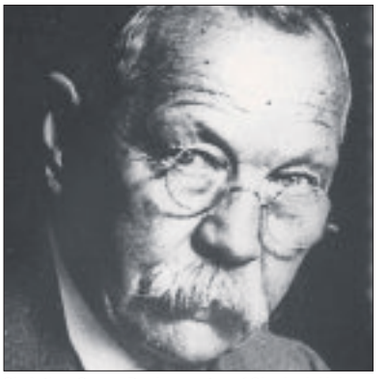
Just a thought.



Martin Clunes during a break in filming at Dudley



Drama co-stars Charles Edwards and Martin Clunes



Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, creator of Sherlock Holmes

Return to scene of crimes for Clunes

ANDREW TURTON on the making of a drama based on a case that intrigued the creator of Sherlock Holmes

ACTOR Martin Clunes has been travelling the country filming his latest TV drama but now the action has returned to the region where it all began – the West Midlands.

The incredible tale of a Staffordshire vicar's son wrongly jailed for an horrific attack on a pit pony and then dramatically proved innocent by Sherlock Holmes creator Sir Arthur Conan Doyle is to be told in a three-part ITV series.

The cast of Arthur and George last week came to the Black Country Living Museum to film in its authentic period buildings to recreate the tale which unfolded at the start of the 20th century and stunned the nation.

Producers turned to the cobbled streets and industrial canalside locations of the Black Country Living Museum to bring the new ITV drama to life.

Gripped

Vicar's son and Birmingham solicitor George Edalji, an Anglo-Asian, was wrongly convicted in 1903 after a series of vicious maiming attacks on horses and other livestock, which became known as the Great Wyrley Outrages. The tale made headlines nationwide and it fell to Conan Doyle to play real-life detective to help to clear his name.

The Great Wyrley Outrages are the centre of a three-part series starring Martin Clunes, best known for Cornish drama Doc Martin and the comedy Men Behaving Badly, as Conan Doyle.

Film crews and actors – including Clunes – arrived at the popular heritage museum, in Tipton Road, Dudley, to begin a three day shoot.



Martin Clunes about to film a scene for Arthur & George at the museum

The museum's buildings were transformed into the Staffordshire village of Great Wyrley in the 1900s when the outrages gripped the nation.

The tale has reached a new audience as in 2005 it was thrust back into the spotlight by author Julian Barnes whose Arthur and George novel was shortlisted for the Man Booker prize and has now been adapted for television.

Clunes finds his latest role intriguing. He said: "It's been a big change for us on the Doc Martin team."

The museum's canal and forge area are being used for filming. Extra set dressing has been brought in to create atmosphere. Actors will even be seen with replicas of the Cannock Chronicle, to read all about the sensational headlines of the case during the show.

Julian Barnes is not directly involved in the production, but has given it his blessing.

"I think Julian was tickled pink to see his book come to life for television," added Clunes, who is starring alongside actor Charles Edwards who has appeared in Downton Abbey.

"It's strange how people can't always see the difference between Sherlock Holmes and his creator.

"People keep asking me if Benedict Cumberbatch is going to show up."

Clunes, sporting a cap and fake moustache on set in character, added: "The costumes are great. The waistcoats and shirts are designed by angels. But I wouldn't have liked to live in Victorian times. I'm too much a fan of modern life."

Unusually for Clunes, filming is being done digitally so that Victorian London can be created via blue screen.

He said: "It doesn't really make any difference for the actors but the picture quality is amazing. Rushes are like Rembrandt."

George Edalji's ordeal began in part when a number of animals were found mutilated in the quiet village of Great Wyrley. The outrages reached national notoriety when anonymous poison pen letters in the name of the 'Wyrley Gang' were sent to the newspapers.

Edalji, whose father came from Bombay and was the vicar at St Mark's parish church, was sentenced to seven years inside Pentonville Prison for the Great Wyrley Rippings, as they were also known.

Fearing a miscarriage of justice and a racist element to the case, Sir Arthur and his trusted manservant, Alfred 'Woody' Wood, investigated and began a campaign to clear Edalji's name.

The Tipton Road museum has also recently been used for filming 1920s gangster drama Peaky Blinders.

Black Country Living Museum spokeswoman Laura Wakelin said: "We are very pleased that the museum is being used as a filming location in yet another primetime drama – especially one whose story is embedded in local history. "

WEEK IN POLITICS



with Daniel Wainwright

AMID the anger over the planned closure of police station front desks, I have to feel a little bit sorry for David Jamieson.

The West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner was elected into the role at enormous cost and on a measly low turnout.

At £3.7 million and serving an electorate of about two million, it was one of the biggest and most expensive by-elections ever. While Labour's Mr Jamieson won a decisive victory with more than 50 per cent of the votes cast, it was not the greatest moment for democracy. Barely one in 10 people bothered to vote for who they wanted to fill a role few even understood. Almost two years on from when the role was created, not that many wanted to accept the offer of greater political and democratic accountability within the force.

This week a lot of people read the name David Jamieson. MPs from his own party are demanding he change a plan to shut the front desks of 27 police stations and reduce the opening hours of others.

The argument in favour is that few people go to the police station in person now, preferring instead to communicate by phone or internet. But, inevitably, the talk turns to the £3 million saving, coming as it does at a time of deep cuts in police funding.

If there was no police and crime commissioner in the first place, there would have been no election and therefore no cost to the taxpayer. In short, that's another year's worth of front desks staying open.

Before anyone gets all pedantic and points out that the election costs are met by the Home Office and the front desks by the police, just remember it's all public money. The source of it, whether central or local government, is you.

Where I feel especially sorry for David Jamieson is how isolated he now appears within his own party. His colleagues in Parliament are keeping things professional but they are all agreed this is a bad idea.

They put on a united front by blaming the Government for the cuts but the decision on how to deal with them rests with the Commissioner. If he does give in to demands of Westminster politicians it would call into question the whole point of the role.

When Dudley Labour MP Ian Austin brought up the plan with William Hague in the Commons he was just told how satisfied people have been with the police, effectively pushing responsibility back to Mr Jamieson in his office in Birmingham.

The review of front desks was started by Mr Jamieson's predecessor Bob Jones, whose sudden death triggered the by-election.

There will now be quite a lot of people looking at these proposals and saying how they certainly didn't vote for this. Of course, that includes the vast majority who didn't vote at all.

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The people who own 'Merry Hell' are rubbing their hands together, raking in 25 years of profits.

To the local people who live close to the centre, at certain times of the year it can only be described as motoring madness.

No investment has been made in the road systems around the centre, leading to congestion at peak times. The centre traffic builds up as far back as Commonside.

Trying to get out is even worse. At the island in Level street, no thought has been given to the traffic trying to get through to Pensnett and beyond, and the hundreds of cars coming out of the centre that merge at the same island.

The centre owners and Dudley Council need to get together and sort out the mess they have created. No thought was even given at the planning stage to the poor road systems around Brierley Hill. The roads are too narrow, and the traffic lights for the Brierley Hill bypass has made things worse.

D POTTER
Brierley Hill

Size of mosque building too large

I SAW the picture of the proposed mosque and the size of it appalled me.

It is too large for the place it is to be built, and too large for Dudley itself.

The problem is, when or if it is built, will it end there?

Or will the those behind the mosque plan buy up other land around about, and continue building other amenities, until we have a small Muslim town within a town?

The building of the mosque is against the wishes of the majority of the people of Dudley.

P STEEN
Stourbridge

Stage could ruin project for gardens

A few weeks ago Dudley Council announced a £1.3m project to revamp the Coronation Gardens.

The refurbishment is to include the re-building of the wall by the fountain – great news, long overdue.

The refurbishment of Apollo Fountain is also great news though I'm not so sure about the re-introduction of water – could invite vandalism. Then, with the pluses comes a whopping minus.

After Priory Park, the gardens are probably our second jewel in the crown. It has flowers, lawns, walkthroughs, seating and now the cenotaph. Why on earth does the council feel a need to build a stage and outdoor centre and events area on this lovely place? It will ruin the gardens and part of the money should go on other needs in the town.

Look at what didn't happen on that other great idea. The square in Stone Street cost us over £800k – and for what? It was once a bus stop and a car park, you know, useful things.

S HUNT
Dudley

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST
Dudley Chronicle,
Chronicle Editorial,
51-53 Queen Street,
Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES

E-MAIL
Dudley.chrons@
expressandstar.co.uk

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

Don't target our vital youth services

HAVING been a leader for 47 years in the voluntary youth service in the Dudley borough I find the proposed closure of the universal youth service (with the exception of all but one) very alarming.

To invest in the future we must invest in our children and young people.

Our children and young people should not be an easy option to save money.

Over the years, Dudley MBC has taken many privileges away from the youth service.

With the introduction of extended schools our four groups, with an average of 80 children and young people attending each week, lost the free bookings of the school hall. Many facilities for our youth have been lost over the years, canoeing, sailing, rock climbing and the withdrawal of ten youth and community mini-buses.

The closure of any of our youth centres or services will be a great mistake as they are providing a place to meet and a safe haven. Bored groups will soon add to the problems that already exist,bringing even greater problems to the communities.

However good the voluntary youth organisations are, they cannot cater to the needs of all young people. The full time youth service provides many alternatives, so Dudley, keep providing one.

B SANDALL
High Acres
Woodcraft Folk

It's the words that matter

RE J Grainger 'Songs just not praise worthy'. Sadly for you the tune is more important than the spiritual message within the words.

I did not hear Michael Ball's interpretation, but surely a new tune brings fresh emphasis to the old words and re-energises the importance of those words and, God willing, brings those words to a new generation.

Perhaps the small mindedness of some folk has brought the church to where it is today?

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VISITORS can take a step back in time for a Christmas filled with roasted chestnuts, traditional fish and chips and gas ligh.

Experience the sights and smells of a bygone era, a time when festive traditions like trees and crackers were just taking off.

From December 19 to 23, the Black Country Museum will open its doors at 6.30pm for anybody who wants the nostalgic excitement of a Victorian Christmas.

By Matthew Growcut

With a full cast of actors ready to bring famous scenes from classics such as A Christmas Carol to life and a pantomime version of Hansel and Gretel performed by Fizzog Productions, it promises a old time Christmas with a Black Country twist.

Houses will be warmed by open fires and will be simply decorated as fits the era, while carol singers can be joined in the chapel for anybody who fancies a festive sing-along.

Roast meat and chestnuts will be available from vendors in the streets, and adults can look forward to mulled wine. Visitors will also be able to take part in making a boiled Christmas pudding.

Irene Deboo, curator of domestic and cultural live at the Black Country Living Museum said: "Victorians were the ones that reinvented Christmas. There's the famous story of Prince Albert and his Christmas tree in 1841, there's Charles Dickens and A Christmas Carol. This was the first time where people actively collected and made carols.

"All of these things start to come into full flow around this time, and on site we have the Victorian Environment that lets us recreate that atmosphere."

Tickets cost £15.95 for adults, £7.95 for children. Bookings made before November 30 will receive a 20 per cent discount. For more information see bclm.com/Christmas.

Council leader is standing down



National role — Leader of Dudley Council and Labour leader Councillor David Sparks

THE leader of Dudley Council has announced he will stand down from the role next month.

Councillor David Sparks has also resigned from his role as leader of the Labour Party on the authority with immediate effect. He will step down as council leader at the next meeting of the full council on Monday after a a successor has been appointed.

Councillor Sparks said he felt it was the right time to give up the role as a new chief executive, Sarah Norman, is due to start in January, when a reduced management team will be put in place. He has been leader of the council since May 2012 and leader of the Labour Group since 2004.

In July this year, Councillor Sparks was also appointed as chairman of the Local Government Association since July this year. He said standing down from his council leader position would also enable him to focus more on this role, working with councils nationwide to 'deliver local solutions to national problems.'

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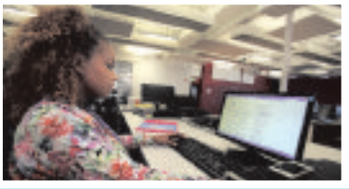
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Family fundraiser is in memory of comic Lee



All for grandad — the grandchildren of comedian Lee Wilson are planning a family fundraising day in his honour

THE family of Black Country comedian Lee Wilson are raising money in his name at a charity event on Sunday.

Mr Wilson, whose real name was Geoff Beards, died four weeks after being diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. A year on and four of his grandchildren are organising a fundraiser to coincide with Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month.

The event will be at the River Rooms in Stourbridge from noon to 4pm. It will feature up to 10 stalls as well as a Santa's grotto and raffle.

Cash raised will go to Pancreatic Cancer Action.

Mr Wilson, of Pedmore, died aged 74. He had turned professional in 1973, won TV talent show New Faces in 1976 and starred on TV show The Comedians. He was also a familiar face with the Black Country Night Out.

Jasper Carrott and Tom O'Connor were among the 350 people who attended his funeral at Oldswinford. He was survived by his wife Sheila and children Tracy, Lee and Debbie. Grandchildren Ellie, Libby, Emily and Sam Martin are organising the fundraiser.



Lots of laughs — comedian Lee Wilson

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UKIP hold protest on combined authority

A PROTEST will be held against plans to create a combined authority for Birmingham and the Black Country.

UKIP West Midland MEPs James Carver and Bill Etheridge have organised the protest which has been branded 'Hands off Birmingham and Hands off the Black Country'.

By Robert Cox

Sedgley-based Mr Etheridge, who is his party's candidate in Dudley North at next year's general election, said: "This protest will mark the launch of our concerted campaign against regionalisation and a combined authority. We don't want to see the centralisation of power.

"We believe local people should have a real say, at a localised level, about issues that concern them. The shift of power away from the people will deeply damage local democracy and accountability. UKIP will fight this."

Council leaders in Dudley, Sandwell, Wolverhampton, Walsall and Birmingham have agreed to set up a combined authority to take powers that may be devolved from London.

Mr Carver, UKIP's Stourbridge candidate in May's general election, described the plan as a 'stitch-up' by Labour. He said: "It is the Labour-run authorities in Walsall, Dudley, Wolverhampton and Birmingham who want to sign away our local democracies to create a combined authority."

The protest will take place outside Dudley Council House at 5.15pm on Monday, ahead of a meeting of the council.

Meanwhile, Conservative MP for Wolverhampton South West Paul Uppal has said the Black Country does not need the help of Birmingham to grow.

He said: "I have no problems with combining services across the Black Country. Expanding this partnership to Birmingham and beyond is simply a step too far."

Customers create room for reflection



Simon Harwood, of Mary Stevens Trading, with (centre) Mike Brown, of Dreamland Beds, and Matron Claire Towns

MARY Stevens Hospice in Stourbridge has opened a new room for reflection following a generous donation of £25,000.

The money came from long-time supporter Mike Brown and the customers of his store, Dreamlands Beds in Mill Street, Brierley Hill. It will also be spent on new beds at the hospice.

Matron Claire Towns said: "We are extremely grateful to Mike and all his customers for their continued support of the hospice. The Peace Room is a fantastic new edition that will provide patients and relatives with a quiet space for private reflection."

Mr Brown said: "It's fantastic that over the last few years, donations from our customers have been given via our delivery service of taking old beds away and assembling new ones.

"It has raised more than £100,000 for Mary Stevens Hospice and has also made it possible for us to supply new beds for the hospice, vans for collection and fitting out hospice shops."

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Song honours war dead with a Christmas carol



Singer Abby Scott launches the charity single with Canterbury chorister William Inscoe and Flight Lieutenant Matt Little

A MUSICAL duo from Kinver are pinning their hopes on topping the charts with a new Christmas charity single in aid of the armed forces.

Abby Scott, aged 29, is part of an ensemble of voices and soloists including Flight Lieutenant Matt Little and 12-year-old Canterbury Cathedral chorister and Radio 2's Young Chorister of the Year finalist William Inscoe.

1914 The Carol of Christmas was composed by her husband Chris Eaton, who wrote Cliff Richard's Christmas hit Saviour's Day alongside Judd Field. It celebrates the power of Christmas to bring peace in the midst of war and commemorates those who fought in World War One.

The singers are accompanied by members of the RAF Spitfire Choir. A video for the song was recorded at the Grave of the Unknown Warrior in Westminster Abbey.

Proceeds from sales will go to the Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund, The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity, and ABF The Soldier's Charity.

Abby said she was delighted to be involved in the project, sayng: "It's a huge honour to be involved in this song and share the message of peace at Christmas. Recording the video at Westminster Abbey at the Grave of the Unknown Solider, alongside today's servicemen and women, was an incredibly powerful experience.

Mother-of-one Abby said: "I can't even imagine sending my son off to war or having my husband not come home. Almost every family and every village in the country was affected by the Great War. Our song honours both those who died and the families who grieved back at home."

The song will be available for to order online.

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Enthusiasts make tracks for model train show



One of the impressive layouts on display for thousands of enthusiasts to view at Warley Model Railway Club's show at the NEC last weekend

ALMOST 20,000 model railway enthusiasts turned out for a Black Country club's annual exhibition.

Warley Model Railway Club held the ever popular event at Birmingham National Exhibition Centre.

On display were were model railway layouts with model steam engines and intricately made platforms and scenery.

More than 90 layouts were featured, each including with detailed stations that attracted thousands of onlookers.

Among those running a display was club member Ian Woodward. The 60-year-old from Rubery set the speed for the trains, while making sure none of the valuable engines collided. He said: "It is a hobby shared by many people still today, mainly men from the older generations — big boys with toys.

"We see some young people come and have a look too. It's great to talk through the models and the lay-outs with people."

Club publicity officer Dave Moorhouse said 17,500 attended during the weekend. Warley Model Railway Club has 240 members. Visit the www.warley-mrc.org.uk website.

Covered skatepark is ready to roll

A GROUP behind a £200,000 indoor skatepark have been congratulated in the House of Commons ahead of its opening in Stourbridge this weekend.

Unit3Sixty in Mill Race Lane will be unveiled on Saturday after work to transform a former industrial unit is completed. BMX riding, skateboarding and scooter riding will be among the activities at the centre.

Stourbridge MP Margot James congratulated firefighter Gavin Pardoe and his team for their work on the project. She has been a keen supporter and helped the group secure funding from the Charity Bank, Sport England and others.

"I am absolutely delighted for Gavin and his team who, through sheer hard work and dedication, have built a magnificent new skatepark," she said.

"After Ramparts closed there was a real sense of loss among young people. It has been wonderful to support the development of Unit-3Sixty's fantastic facility. I know that the park will attract skaters from across the whole West Midlands."

Tesco, Waitrose and the Ryemarket in Stourbridge and Black Country businessman Geoff Hill also supported the scheme, which won the backing of Dudley Council's deputy leader, Councillor Pete Lowe.

The finishing touches are being put to the £200,000 indoor skatepark ahead of its opening on Saturday.

Police station counter cuts move

HALESOWEN Police Station is one of three in the borough that will close to the public amid £3 million cuts, the force has revealed.

The front counters at Halesowen, Dudley and Stourbridge have been earmarked to shut.

In total 27 front offices across the West Midlands will close with more than 90 of the 170 jobs at risk.

Opening hours will also be reduced at Brierley Hill . The front counter which is currently available 24 hours a day will be open between 8am and 10pm. Sedgley Police Station will act as a contact point, staffed by volunteers.

West Midlands Police says the proposals to shut front counters follow an independent review, which shows the majority of the public no longer visit stations and instead make phone calls, use the internet or social media to contact officers.

Anger

But the plans have been met with anger and disappointment from councillors, unions and several Black Country MPs.

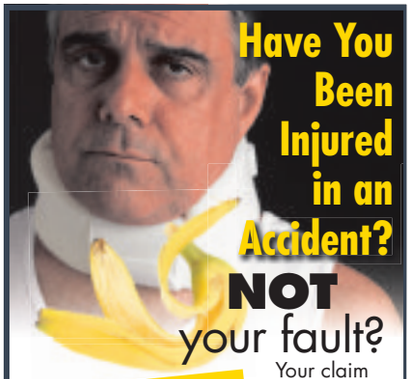
Dudley North MP Ian Austin has vowed to campaign against the closure plans for Dudley Police Station and has launched a petition urging bosses to re-think the move.

He said: "Dudley is a major town, not everyone who shops or lives there has a mobile phone and they ought to be able to speak to a police officer face to face."

Dudley Police Station is currently open throughout the week from 10am to 6pm.

It costs the force £5.5m to run the counters.

Police and Crime Commissioner David Jamieson said: "Ninety five per cent of people have mobile phones now, and can contact the police from anywhere."


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New £7m wave of cuts for public transport

ANOTHER £7 million of cuts are on the way at the authority that oversees transport in the West Midlands, as councils prepare to slash their levy again.

Earlier this year Centro unveiled a plan to axe 89 jobs —a quarter of its workforce — to cope with a £7m cut in the funding it gets from seven councils.

But the authorities are set to do it again in the next financial year, which starts in April, as they are all grappling with their own multi-million pound funding cuts.

The cuts mean Centro will see its funding fall from £145 million last year to £131.4m, with £138.7m having been allocated this year.

The authority is in charge of bus shelters, funding for discount fares for children and pensioners, park and ride services at rail and Metro stations and passenger information among other aspects of transport.

Elderly

It also works to attract investment.

The cuts will include slashing £700,000 from the budget of the ring and ride service, which offers door to door transport for elderly and disabled people if they are unable to use buses, trams and trains.

Other new cuts have yet to be revealed. Centro previously put forward plans to charge pensioners for tram and train travel and to increase children's fares but the proposals were scrapped amid protests.

Birmingham City Council, with the largest population, contributes the most to Centro.Its levy will fall from £54.4m to £51.5m from April. Dudley's levy will drop from £15.7m to 14.8m while Sandwell's will go from £15.6m to £14.8m.

Centro chief executive Geoff Inskip said: "In response to the districts facing severe grant reductions from central government, the Integrated Transport Authority sought to identify various ways in which savings could be made."

Tree tribute to park creator



The oak tree is planted in honour of William Shenstone at the Leasowes

THE creator of one of Dudley borough's most famous landmarks has been honoured to mark the 100th anniversary of his birth.

Trees have been planted in memory of William Shenstone who designed the grade I listed Leasowes park in Halesowen.

To commemorate the occasion, The Friends of the Leasowes, alongside cabinet member Councillor Hilary Bills planted a large common oak in a prominent position on site which is marked with a memorial plaque.

Smaller trees have also been put in to create a 'grove of oaks' which was an original feature designed and planted by Shenstone himself but which was subsequently lost. By planting these new saplings, visitors have helped to recreate the feature for future generations to enjoy.

Environment boss Councillor Hilary Bills, said: "This tree planting event, supported so wholeheartedly by The Friends of the Leasowes, is a fitting tribute to the vision of William Shenstone in creating this stunning landscape 250 years ago."

Security at New Street station is stepped up

EXTRA security staff have been drafted in to provide crowd control at Birmingham New Street because of a the huge number of people visiting the city's Frankfurt Christmas Market.

They will be in place on Friday evenings from 3pm and at weekends, until December 21.

Network Rail says the market combined with the seasonal increase in shoppers, helps to create one of the busiest times of the year in the city. The increase in passengers sees the number using the station each day average around 180,000.

Security staff will be on hand to help move people between the concourse area and platforms as well as being on hand to provide assistance and for crowd control measures.

Steve Lewis, station manager, said: "The Christmas Market and festive period are great for Birmingham but put a significant pressure on the station to safely manage much higher passenger numbers and sudden large surges of people trying to catch their train.

"One Friday last year saw an increase of 55,000 people using the station compared to normal and while the station team did a fantastic job of helping to keep people on the move, there was inevitable disruption to some passengers.

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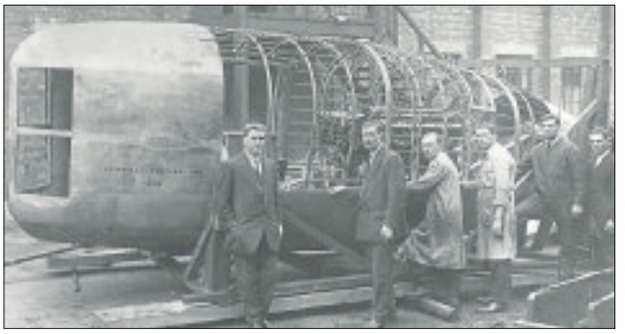
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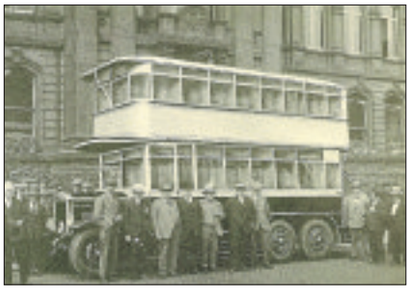
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Harry Nott, ex-RFC, at his wedding



Sunbeam workers in 1919 with one of the airship gondolas they were to produce



A Guy 6 -wheel bus, one of post war success stories



Some of the many in Josiah Parkes in 1922

How post-war work return never took off

AT 11 am on November 11, 1918 the guns fell silent across the world.

They were firing right up to the last second, as many of the gunners wanted to claim that they had fired the last shot in the 'War to End all Wars'.

Then began the process of returning the millions of men and women, but mostly men to their homes, where many expected to return to their old jobs, supplanting the women who had taken their place; but things were not as simple as that.

Wolverhampton, and the Black Country in general, were geared up for war, turning out munitions, warplanes, guns, and all the paraphenalia of the modern conflict.

Orders were cancelled, though production of, now unwanted items, continued into 1919.

MEMORY LANE

By Alec Brew

Companies had to find new products to turn their skills to. Wolverhampton was well served in the new motorised age with many vehicle manufacturers, who thought they could return to car and motor-bike production and find a ready market with the returning servicemen, many of whom had become well used to motor vehicles during the four years of conflict.

Dominated

Sunbeam returned their car production from Rover in Coventry but still hoped to make a large business in the production of aero-engines, which had dominated the Villiers Street factories during the war.

They were to find that the competition from Rolls-Royce in particular and from cheap war-surplus engines was too much, and they hardly sold an aircraft engine after the war.

Round the corner Star returned to car production, but were never able to sell enough from their confined factories to sustain the business, and firstly their Briton division and then Star itself went to the wall, and Edward Lisle, founder of the company took his life.

Guy returned to making trucks, and became hugely successful.

Other companies were also to find ready markets for their metal-bashing skills, making locks, bicycles, ploughshares, and all the nuts and bolts to put them together.

Elsewhere servicemen returned to quieter lives, opening shops, starting their own businesses, often with the skills they had learned in the Army, and looked forward to re-building their lives.



Edward Lisle who took his own life after business failure

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To find out more please contact Sandwell Family Information Service 0121 569 4914 or visit www.sandwell.gov.uk/freechildcare

Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council

Sandwell Family Information Service



Heart of the community

COMMUNITY Transport began life in 1964 when Father Bryan Scrivener, and wife Dorothy, from Kings Heath, decided to support their local community by collecting old furniture to help homeless people find and furnish accommodation.

They stored everything in their front room and used his Jeep to transport people and goods around the area. By 1966, demand had risen so sharply that they registered Community Transport as a charity, making it the first known use of the term community transport in the UK.

Community Transport operates in three regions – the West Midlands, North West and North East.

Its services include providing low cost minibus hire to voluntary and community groups, schools and not-for-profit organisations.

Based at Sandwell, Liz Sutton runs the minibus service which has had a successful year. Its dial-a-ride service in South Staffordshire is continually growing and they have also purchased a new 2014 minibus which is the first of two to continue with the growth of passenger transport,



A new 2014 minibus has been purchased by Community Transport

ensuring comfortable travel for all they support.

The buses are available for self hire too. Please contact Community Transport for further details.

A record breaking year saw the organisation help 190,000 people reach vital health-checks, appointments and destinations.

"Many people are isolated in their own homes and are unable to access services without Community Transport's 80-strong fleet of accessible minibuses and vans," says its chief executive Jo Beaumont.

"Our Sandwell branch is situated near to Asda in Great Bridge and can easily be accessed by the number 74 bus route from Dudley or West Bromwich.

"Our aim is to supply good quality second hand furniture at affordable prices with free delivery within the Sandwell area.

"We rely on donations from the community and we collect your goods for free, we accept sofas, beds, wardrobes, chest of drawers, electrical items, bric-a-brac, bedding, toys and clothes.

"Any items that you have that are in general good condition we are interested in. Just give us a call and we will arrange a collection that suits you.

"Our opening hours are Monday to Thursday 9am to 5pm, Friday 9am to 4.30pm and Saturday 9am to 1pm.

"Pease feel free to pop in and have a browse."

There are five furniture stores in the West Midlands based at West Bromwich, Bilston, Wednesfield, Birmingham and Coventry.

All offer a free collection service for unwanted furniture and stock and sell a range of good quality furniture at affordable prices.

Thousands of low-income households have been helped in the buying of good-quality furniture and white goods at affordable prices, saving more than 400 tonnes of such items from being dumped in landfill sites.

Services include collecting donated good quality furniture items, selling them on at affordable prices, as well as carrying out house clearances and removals – and providing minibus and other transport-related training.

Community Transport is always looking for placements and volunteers to help it provide the best service it can.

If you feel you could spare a few hours or days to help support the community and gain some valuable experience visit the West Bromwich store or contact Community Transport, at 216 Great Bridge Street, West Bromwich, B70 0DE. Telephone 0121 520 8168.



The registered charity helps to furnish the homes of thousands in the borough



The aim is to supply good quality second hand furniture at affordable prices

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www.communitytransport.org

supporting local communities

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Girl group album is a surefire Bette

Reviews by Leon Burakowski

BETTE Midler has long been the queen of cabaret-style entertainment with her blend of ballads, show tunes and wicked sense of humour.

To most under-30s she is probably best known as the funniest of the three witches in Disney's Halloween favourite Hocus Pocus.

Now she's back with her tribute to girl group pop, from the 1930s to 90s. **It's The Girls** is a classy project with Bette providing her own backing vocals, though she enlists the queen of backing singers Darlene Love to duet on The Crystals' He's Sure The Boy I Love. Be My Baby, One Fine Day and Tell Him stick close to the originals.

Elsewhere she gives the songs an interesting twist, introducing a hint of her home state of Hawaii to Mr Sandman and brilliantly slowing Martha and the Vandellas' Come And Get These Memories to a poignant ballad. A stripped back, piano-led version of TLC's Waterfalls packs an emotional punch and she even pulls off a banjo-picking hillbilly version of You Can't Hurry Love. The album ends in fine vintage style with the Dixieland jazz of It's The Girl.

Bette Midler begins her first UK tour in 35 years at the Barclaycard Arena in Birmingham on July 9.

The combined CD/DVD package **Whitney Houston Live: Her Greatest Performances** combines 16 tracks plus 18 video performances, starting with her teenaged debut singing Home on The Merv Griffin TV show in 1983, via her Super Bowl performance of The Star Spangled Banner in '91 to her emotional I Didn't Know My Own Strength on The Oprah Winfrey Show in 2009. She died in 2012, aged only 48.



Whitney Houston — many of her famous live performances on a new album



Bette Midler — the singer and comedienne pays tribute to girl groups

As a live album, this doesn't hang together as well as a single concert performance but Whitney fans may enjoy the overview of her career.

Whitney Houston also appears on **Barry Manilow** album **My Dream Duets** in which Barry sings with a lot of very famous but very dead stars of popular music. It may have been a dream come true for Manilow to duet with Judy Garland, Sammy Davis Jr, Dusty Springfield, Louis Armstrong, etc. I think it is more of a nightmare.

These are not true duets with musical to-and-fro between the artists, they are — however expertly done — slice and splice jobs. It's a bad concept and a creative cul-de-sac for an artist who is surely talented enough to create music without technically resurrecting artists who have no say in the matter. A sample is one thing but to tamper with these artists' music within the genres in which they excelled is questionable.

Moody dance anthems come with an Ibiza twist from synth pop veterans **Erasure** on new album **The Violet Flame**. The duo celebrate nearly 30 years of hits at a sold-out Wolverhampton Civic Hall on Saturday.

Young singer-songwriter James Page, under stage name **Sivu**, creates a potent atmosphere on his debut album **Something On High.** It's a blend of tremulous vocals and haunted soundscapes with songs of isolation and yearning. Listen if you like London Grammar or Wild Beasts. He will be supporting Bombay Bicycle Club at Wolverhampton Civic on December 10.

Oohs and aahs as actors go Full Monty

The Full Monty, Grand Theatre, Wolverhampton

CLEVER casting, quality acting, fast-moving scenery, special effects — and a delightful young boy. This show has The Full Monty.

This stage production follows the story of the hit 90s movie. Set against the backdrop of industrial depression in Sheffield, six men who have fallen on hard times become strippers for one night only.

It's a feel good story, well-delivered and funny throughout with many one liners.

And, of course, a famous piece de resistance.

Gary Lucy leads the cast as Gaz, alongside ex-soap stars Louis Emerick (Horse) and Rupert Hill (Guy), Andrew Dunn, of Dinner Ladies fame as Gerald, Bobby Schofield (Lomper) and Martin Miller (Dave).

All bear striking resemblances to their film characters and, for the most part, had the accents off to a tee.

There were audible gasps at Lomper's suicide attempt, oohs as Guy showed off his rear, aahs at the terrific performance of Raif Clark as Gaz's son Nathan — and screams from delighted women at a finale that revealed the naked truth.

The Full Monty runs at The Grand until Saturday (November 29).

Mark Shipp

Poozies perform perfectly

The Poozies MAC, Birmingham

THE Poozies turned up on stage at MAC Birmingham looking like four friends on a girls' night out but with one major exception, these ladies had brought their own entertainment.

Mary Macmaster on electro harp, Sally Barker on guitar, Eilidh Shaw on fiddle and Mairearad Green on accordion are an absolute delight to listen to and the 90 minute set they did just flew by, leaving you wanting more.

Their mixture of self-penned and traditionally arranged Scottish, Gaelic, folk and country-style music is executed with such ease of precision and with their harmonised singing it is simply a joy to sit back and let their music wash over you.

Each of the Poozies has an impressive career outside of the band playing with some of the most skilled musicians on the circuit and individually they are amongst the finest of players but it's when they come together, that the magic that is The Poozies happens.

Danny Farragher

REVIEWS



Hackney soul singer Paloma Faith in action at Wolverhampton

Funky diva is back to her best at Civic Hall

Paloma Faith, Wolverhampton Civic Hall

JUST weeks after being in hospital, funky diva Paloma Faith was back to her feisty, energetic and soulful best to treat a full house Civic Hall audience to a night to remember on Saturday.

Her latest album A Perfect Contradiction, now out in an 'Outsiders Edition' enhanced by extra tracks, provided the material. Its blend of retro soul, funky grooves and modern R&B struck a chord with an audience who didn't seem to mind the absence of her earlier hits.

Paloma looked stunning with a blonde 60s hairstyle and short, pom-pom trimmed Natalia Kaut dress. She duetted with Brett Dennen on Van Morrison's Crazy Love. Californian Dennen, a Where's Wally? look-alike, makes up for his lack of sartorial elegance with a gentle voice and fine songs revealed during his support slot.

Paloma's show reached its climax with a storming cover version of Ike and Tina Turner's River Deep Mountain High, Can't Rely On You and her first UK No1 (achieved with Sigma) Changing. **LB**

Classic is brought to the stage

To Kill A Mockingbird, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

A CLASSIC American novel gets an efficient transformation into a poignant play in this production.

The fine ensemble conjure the claustrophobic feel of a dirt poor Deep South town, as a racist miscarriage of justice is played out before the innocent, unsentimental eyes of tomboy Scout, her brother Jem and friend Dill (on Tuesday played superbly by Rosie Boore, Billy Price and Milo Panni).

On a stark wooden stage dominated by a tree, the actors create Harper Lee's blend of southern gothic and courtroom drama. Music by Phil King creates a delightful frame to the scenes.

Daniel Betts radiates decency as Scout's father, Atticus Finch, the lawyer who knows that even proving a black man's innocence may not be enough to get him acquitted in 1930s Alabama. Director Timothy Sheader does the book justice and his production received a standing ovation at the Alex, where it continues until Saturday (November 29). **LB**

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Bishop backs advent calender

A CHARITY advent calender being sold to help raise money for a baby clinic in Kenya is being supported by the Bishop of Worcester.

The Rt Revd Dr John Inge is backing the Real Advent Calendar produced by the Meaningful Chocolate Company.

Officials are hoping to fund equipment for a baby clinic in Kenya by donating £10,000 from the sales.

Behind the calender's first giant window is a 32-page Christmas story-activity booklet designed to be used every day in Advent.

The booklet gives more detail about the Christmas story and has seven advent challenges.

The calendar also comes with 25 Fairtrade Belgian chocolates and a line of the Christmas story behind each of the foiled windows.

The Real Advent Calendar costs £3.99 and can be purchased by visiting the website www.realadvent.co.uk

Respected astrologer and journalist has died aged 84

AN ASTROLOGER who forecast the Zeebrugge ferry disaster has died, aged 84.

Dennis Elwell of Stourbridge had feared shipping companies' safety procedures were not adequate.

Two weeks after P&O Ferries wrote to him dismissing his warning, their ship the Herald of Free Enterprise capsized off Zeebrugge, Belgium, in 1987. More than 190 people died in the tragedy, which led to new safety regulations in the British ferry industry.

Mr Elwell had also made predictions about dangers facing underground transport. In the same year there was a devastating fire in London's King's Cross station – something he had warned of in an interview with The Chronicle's sister newspaper the Express & Star.

Sceptics criticised the basis for his predictions but Mr Elwell appeared on the BBC's Kilroy programme in 1987 and featuring in a Channel 4 documentary, Witness, in 2000 which examined the rising influence of astrology.

The father-of-four taught himself the basics of astrology before having an article he wrote on reincarnation published in the magazine Prediction at the age of 19. This set him on the path to a long career writing regularly for American Astrology, lecturing all over the world and writing a book and numerous articles on the subject. He set up a problem-solving consultancy, helping many people including celebrities, and also provided teaching to budding astrologers through his distance learning course. His 1987 work Cosmic Loom is a recommended text among astrologers.

Mr Elwell also worked for 30 years as a journalist on the County Express, which later became the Stourbridge News.

He had lived in the Stourbridge area all his life and had recently moved to Abele View Care Home, where he was receiving round the clock support for vascular dementia.

Yet right up until the last few days of his life, Mr Elwell had fascinated staff by explaining the thinking behind theories of the stars and their influence on human lives.

Sarah Smith, one of Mr Elwell's four children, said: "My father was an original thinker who was widely respected in his field."

Benefits change debt warning

CHANGES to benefits will mean thousands of council house tenants fall into debt.

An organisation in charge of council housing is warning people that they face being evicted unless they keep on top of their money as a new system sees them paid into their bank accounts, instead of benefits going to their landlords. Wolverhampton Homes expects that Universal Credit will eventually affect around 8,500 of tenants in its 23,000 homes.

There were half a million working age people on benefits in February this year in the West Midlands. They included 30,125 in Dudley.

Universal Credit is replacing Jobseeker's Allowance, housing benefit, working tax credit, child tax credit, employment and support allowance and income support.

Bliss family group on hunt for packers



Yvonne Artiss with youngest Bliss member Lexi Haffner

A CHARITY that supports families whose children spent time in neonatal or intensive care units will be holding a fundraising bag pack at Sainsbury's Merry Hill.

Dudley Bliss were selected as the supermarket's charity of the year back in July and, on December 20 and 21, parent-volunteers will be in store holding a bag-packing event to raise as much money as possible.

The search is also on for any extra volunteers willing to lend a hand for the day.

Parent-volunteer Stacey Tyler-Crisp said: "If anyone can help please get in touch as we need more than 10 people to add to our current list of bag packers to make the event possible."

Earlier this month, staff members Laura Tolley and Yvonne Artiss visited Dudley Bliss to take part in a baby sensory session where they handed over £100 worth of sensory toys bought from the money they had raised. Anyone interested in helping out can call dudleybliss@live.co.uk or visit www.dudleybliss.org.

The charity launched in April 2009.

Helicopter patrol along power lines

HELICOPTER patrols are being carried out across the Black Country and Worcestershire as part of checks on power lines.

Western Power Distribution (WPD) will be doing inspection work during December and January. The helicopters will be used to spot potential hazards on the high voltage overhead network.

Robin Tutcher, Chief Pilot at WPD, said: "Using a helicopter for patrols is the safest, fastest and most effective way to carry out checks on large sections of the network.

"Taking this bird's eye view enables us to check large areas quickly. We're able to spot potential hazards early so that our engineers can plan investment and maintenance work more effectively, and do any necessary work before it causes problems for our customers."

The patrols will be on the look-out for trees growing into overhead lines, which cause problems in stormy weather.

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Fares to rise for ring and ride bus service

RING and ride buses are having their funding slashed by £700,000 with fares to use them in the evening set to double.

Council leaders in the West Midlands will give £7.8 million to run the service next year, down from £8.5m for the current year. It will mean the £1 fare for using the service after 7pm will go to £2. But the Sunday service scrapped this year will be brought back, with a £2 charge.

The £1 for using it Monday to Friday before 7pm is fixed.

Around 22,000 people use the door-to-door minibuses, operated by charity West Midlands Special Needs Transport. It runs across Dudley, Wolverhampton, Sandwell, Walsall, Birmingham, Coventry and Solihull.

Earlier this year the 60p fare went up to £1.

Councillor Richard Worrall, who had previously led a 56,000 name petition against cuts, said council and transport bosses were 'making the best of a bad situation'.

Hospital trust says sorry to victims of jailed neurosurgeon

THE hospital trust that employed a neurosurgeon who committed multiple sex offences against vulnerable female patients has apologised to his victims.

University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust admitted it may have missed a chance to stop Nafees Hamid and offered 'an unreserved apology' to six of its former patients after the consultant neurosurgeon's conviction.



Sex offender Nafees Hamid has been jailed

Hamid , who has been jailed for 16 years, was previously an award-winning specialist neurosurgeon at the city's Queen Elizabeth and Priory Hospitals.

The trust said an email complaining of 'inappropriate behaviour' by Hamid was sent to it in 2009, but never raised with senior managers, in breach of its policies.

The email was only brought to the attention of hospital bosses when the woman again contacted the trust in November last year, during the police investigation into Hamid's offending.

Hamid's offending took place between 2012 and 2013 at the city's private Priory Hospital and the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, which is run by the NHS trust.

The trust said the complaint was dealt with by an employee who sought an explanation from Hamid, which was accepted. However, in a statement it added: "The policy and guidance in place at the time stated that a complaint of this nature should have been escalated and investigated according to trust procedure rather than being dealt with at source."

A spokesman said: "The trust accepts that by not following proper procedures in dealing with the 2009 complaint, an opportunity was potentially missed to prevent the subsequent offences that occurred. For this, we offer an unreserved apology to Nafees Hamid's victims."

Dame Julie Moore, the trust's chief executive, said an inquiry would continue.

Call for anti-freeze action



Veterinary nurse Nicola Bond with pet cat Poppy is backing the campaign

VETS have made calls changes to be made to anti-freeze products, to protect people's pets from harm.

Staff at White Cross Vets, in Regent Street, Tividale, say they have treated several pets in recent weeks who have ingested the sweet-tasting liquid and died from kidney failure as a result. They are now urging people to sign a petition calling on manufactures to add a bittering agent to make the taste less appealing to pets.

Clinic director Bonnie Leibowitch said: "We see too many poisoned pets across our practices every year who are in distress after swallowing antifreeze either as a terrible accident or a malicious act of cruelty.

"The deadly ingredient Ethylene Glycol is highly toxic and because of its sweet taste it is especially appealing to pets but just one teaspoon is enough to kill a cat and a tablespoon will kill a dog."

Naomi Fountain, whose pet cat Mischief died of antifreeze poisoning in 2009, is petitioning the Government to change existing laws.

She said: "Currently our petition has over 20,000 signatures."

To sign it or to get more information visit www.whitecrossvets.co.uk or call (01384) 884 141.

Plans in motion for 2015 Black Country festival

THE team behind the first Black Country festival are inviting applications from people hoping to host events in 2015.

Tens of thousands of people enjoyed hundreds of themed events marking official Black Country Day on July 14.

Organisers are already planning an even bigger event for next year.

Showcase

Committee member Stephen Pitts said: "We were delighted with the reaction of the public, not just at the showcase event in Dudley but at all the other events that went on throughout the four boroughs and in particular the number of people who had their own Black Country themed parties."

He added: "The backing the public has given the festival in its inaugural year has put us in a very strong position to approach various partners and councils across the Black Country to help put on something truly special next year."

Anyone with an act, a stall or an event they would like to be included in next year's festival should email info@blackcountryfestival.co.uk with details.

Parcel firm is to deliver festive boost for jobs

SIX hundred jobs have been created at a parcel delivery firm's sorting centre to deal with the Christmas rush.

Yodel, which has a main sorting centre on the Willenhall-Darlaston border, has created the seasonal roles, which include warehouse staff and drivers.

Bosses say they have already filled 450 vacancies and are looking for an additional 150 sorting staff for its centre in Owen Road.

The company, which handles more than 145 million parcels per year, is recruiting 5,000 part-time and full-time staff across the UK in preparation for the Christmas peak, when it expects to handle up a million parcels a day.

Bosses say that although these are seasonal positions for the festive period, many of the roles could become permanent.

Yodel executive chairman Dick Stead said: "Many of the vacancies are flexible and perfect for those who want to fit work around families, or who have retired but want to remain active and earn some extra cash.

"Others are full-time and we expect many people to stay on beyond December."

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D8034 Thorncroft pendulum wall clock

D8035 Redbridge mantle clock



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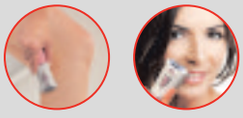
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Measures W31 x D30 x H19cm, speakers measure W14 x D13 x H22cm.

D7253 Multi Music Centre
GF666 Spare Stylus £9.99

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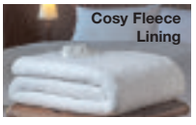
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Standard Single	D6671	£39.99	£19.99	£20
Standard Double	D6672	£49.99	£29.99	£20
Standard King	D6673	£59.99	£39.99	£20
Fleece Single	D6674	£44.99	£29.99	£15
Fleece Double	D6675	£54.99	£39.99	£15
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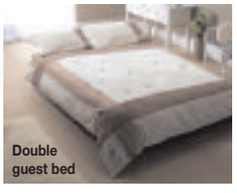
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D7514	Folding guest bed – double	£129.99	£279.99	£150
D6681	Single bed fabric cover	£9.99		
D6733	Single cabinet - light oak	£99.99	£129.99	£30
D6734	Single cabinet - mahogany	£79.99	£129.99	£50
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D5879

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Measures L59 x W42cm.

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D6815



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With classic chino styling, soft fleece lining, two slant pockets, belt loops and two back button pockets, these traditional favourites provide the perfect solution for the colder seasons. An additional hidden expanding waist offers an extra two inches of give, enabling you to move and stretch with ease.

Sizes:
Leg 27" 29" 31" 33",
Waist 32" 34" 36" 38" 40" 42" 44" 46" 48".



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These are available in comfortable thermal lined leisure trousers in a choice of four colours. Stylish and practical with an adjustable drawstring waist and button fastening for all day comfort, they feature two front hand pockets and rear pocket. Made from super soft machine washable 65% polyester 35% cotton, they are a must for the colder months ahead.

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This is the perfect beginners exercise bike to help lose weight, burn calories and tone up.

A built in computer monitor measures time, speed, distance and calories, so you can keep track of your progress. Developed from high quality materials it has been designed to allow for comfortable and reliable usage.

This product comes with a one year guarantee. Features adjustable saddle height and resistance levels.

Dimensions: H 110cm x L 82cm x W 51cm

Maximum user weight: 100kg

D6703



Oh what a night as the Jersey Boys arrive for festive season

Detecting a gem available on DVD

ON a comedy scene that seems to be getting increasingly cruel and vulgar, recent rural sitcom Detectorists was a welcome dose of gently-paced whimsy on BBC4.

Written and directed by Mackenzie Crook (from The Office), he and Toby Jones (Infamous/Marvellous) play a pair of metal detector enthusiasts who think they are in with a chance of discovering a buried treasure of Staffordshire Hoard proportions. They face competition from a rival metal detecting club, a bonkers landowner and flawed relationships with the opposite sex.

A nicely acted ensemble piece in a market town setting, if not seen it is worth discovering now on DVD.

Leon Burakowski

South songs will fill the Civic Hall

THE songs of The Beautiful South and new album What Have We Become will be heard by a full house at Wolverhampton Civic Hall on Friday for Paul Heaton and Jacqui Abbott.

On Friday Peter Gabriel is at the LG Arena, Diversity dance at the NIA, and Gertcha duo Chas & Dave are at Birminghan Town Hall. Synth pop pair Erasure have filled the Civic Hall on Saturday, the same night Wolverhampton's Scott Matthews performs his haunting album Home Part 1 at Birmingham Town Hall. McBusted and Ed Sheeran are among Saturday's acts at Free Radio Live at the LG Arena.

Giving Peace a chance

ROCK band Peace follow their acclaimed debut album In Love with their second album, Happy People, on February 9.

The guitar crashing lo-fi outfit bring their surly sound home to the West Midlands for a gig at Birmingham's Institute on January 24.

Droitwich brothers Harry and Sam Koisser joined forces with Doug Castle and Dom Boyce at Worcester Sixth Form College.

In 2014 the band played the main stage of Reading and Leeds festival, sold out numerous dates throughout the UK and released singles Money and Lost on Me.

Fans of Bombay Bicycle Club will get a preview of the new songs with Peace due to support them at Wolverhampton Civic Hall on December 10.



Happy People — Worcestershire rock band Peace are unveiling their 'scuzzy but beautiful' new album, mostly produced by Arctic Monkeys and Kasabian producer Jim Abbiss

JERSEY Boys has now been seen by over 19 million people worldwide and is firmly established as one of the London West End's most popular shows.

Now the show comes to Birmingham on tour, running at the New Alexandra Theatre from December 9 to January 4.

It tells the remarkable true story of Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons and their rise to stardom from the wrong side of the track. These four boys from New Jersey became one of the most successful bands in pop history, were inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame and sold 175 million records worldwide, all before they turned 30.

Telling their story from the 1950s to 70s, the show is packed with their hits, including Beggin', Sherry, Walk Like A Man, December, 1963 (Oh What a Night), Big Girls Don't Cry, My Eyes Adored You, Let's Hang On (To What We've Got), Bye Bye Baby, Can't Take My Eyes Off You, Working My Way Back to You, Fallen Angel, Rag Doll and Who Loves You.

Worldwide

Jersey Boys is the winner of 55 major awards worldwide, including the Olivier Award for Best New Musical. The show originally opened on Broadway in 2006, receiving the Tony Award for Best Musical. It is still running on Broadway, in Las Vegas and in the West End.

Joining West End star Tim Driesen as Frankie Valli are Stephen Webb, Sam Ferriday and Lewis Griffiths, playing Tommy DeVito, Bob Gaudio and Nick Massi respectively. Matt Corner will play the role of Frankie Valli at certain performances. Also in the cast will be Sean Kingsley as Gyp DeCarlo, Matt Gillett as Bob Crewe, Nathaniel Morrison as Barry Belson and Damian Buhagiar as Joey Pesci, the early fan and 'go fer' who became a movie star.

The actual Frankie Valli brings the latest incarnation of The Four Seasons to Birmingham's Genting Arena (formerly the LG) on July 2 next year.



A scene from hit musical Jersey Boys

Meanwhile, on Wednesday, December 3, the Robin 2 at Bilston hosts seated show Jersey Boy with Stephen James performing the Frankie Valli story with the help of video projection.

The Mount Pleasant venue has more nostalgia on the way. From The Jam, featuring Jam bassist Bruce Foxton, celebrate the 35-year-old Settings Sons album tomorrow night (Friday). Then Nick Dagger and The Counterfeit Stones want to spend the night together on Saturday. Bad Manners bring boisterous ska on December 11, Ray Jackson's Lindisfarne play on December 15 and it's Merry Xmas Everybody from Dave Hill and Don Powell's Slade on December 18.

Popular ballet is a Christmas cracker

IT'S beginning to feel a lot like Christmas... especially now that The Nutcracker is arriving at Birmingham Hippodrome.

The Birmingham Royal Ballet's annual festive treat for its home city is a feel-good seasonal spectacular and a much-loved part of the build up to Christmas in the West Midlands.

It tells the story of a young girl, Clara, who is whisked off to a magical land on Christmas Eve after her brave Nutcracker soldier fights an army of rats. Highlights include the Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy.

Sir Peter Wright's The Nutcracker, featuring the beautiful music of Tchaikovsky, will be staged from tomorrow (Friday) until December 13.

Rocker Joe now faces worlds war

HE dazzled the nation paying tribute to his rock heroes Led Zeppelin and Black Sabbath on The X Factor. Now former bricklayer and salesman Joe Whelan, from Wolverhampton, is to appear at the LG Arena as part of the final arena tour for Jeff Wayne's spectacular musical version of War of the Worlds.

The Martians arrive at the LG on Friday, December 5. Joe features alongside Jason Donovan, Westlife's Brian McFadden, X Factor winner Shayne Ward, West End star Carrie Hope Fletcher, a string orchestra and a hologram of Liam Neeson.

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THE SHUGBOROUGH CHRISTMAS FAIR
Friday 28 Saturday 29 & Sunday 30 November
Come and enjoy some seasonal shopping in the fabulous setting of the Hall grounds where you'll be able to sample and buy everything from our wide range of arts, craft and gift stalls with anything from jewellery and other accessories including handicrafts hand made cards, photography candles, aromatherapy products, through to ceramics and wood turning. Food and drink would include wine, real-food as well as chocolates andmany other confections. And there's an extra special seasonal treat in the magnificent Mansion House. It will re-open especially during the Christmas Fair, offering you a glimpse of how the Victorians decorated their grand houses for Christmas. The house will be filled with fresh flowers and lit by the light of hundreds of candles – the pièce de résistance being the magnificent candlelit 300-year-old chandelier. Shugborough Candlelit Mansion House will open from 11am to 4pm with the downstairs area decorated throughout with fresh flowers, Christmas decorations and trees.
The Fair is open between 10am - 4pm each day
Shugborough Estate Milford Staffordshire ST17 0XB
admission: £9 concessions: £7.50 (*combined ticket includes admission to both House and Fair*)
Single tickets will be available to purchase at the gate on the day at a cost of £5 adults, £4 concessions
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CHOICE



Aiysha Hart

Atlantis
(BBC1, 8.15pm)
Rather like the recent run of Doctor Who, at first glance it may appear that Atlantis is a classic teatime show that has somehow been shoehorned into a post-8pm slot by mistake. However, Sarah Parish, who plays the scheming Pasiphae, recently revealed that the makers knew the second series would be airing at a later time, and took the opportunity to make the new run a little darker. So, consider yourself forewarned as this week Ariadne is formally crowned Queen, but has more than just ruling a battle-scarred city to worry about, especially with Pasiphae still at large. Meanwhile, Jason faces a struggle for his own as he fights for glory on the tournament ground. Jack Donnelly, Aiysha Hart and Mark Addy star.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Live. **11.30** James Martin: Home Comforts. **12.00** BBC News; Weather. **12.10** Football Focus. **12.50** Saturday Sportsday. **1.00** Live Snooker: UK Championship. The second round gets under way at the Barbican Centre in York. **2.00** Live International Rugby Union. Wales v South Africa (Kick-off 2.30pm). **4.30** Final Score. **5.25** Celebrity Mastermind. With Tony Livesey, Ava Vidal, Monty Halls and the Rev Richard Coles. (R) **5.55** BBC News; Regional News; Weather.

6.10 Pointless Celebrities. Panellists including Lionel Blair, Wayne Sleep, Karen Barber and Louie Spence join hosts Alexander Armstrong and Richard Osman for a dance edition of the general knowledge quiz.

7.00 Strictly Come Dancing. Tess Daly and Claudia Winkleman present as twinkle-toed couples perform a series of routines on an Around the World theme - all of which come from different parts of the globe. The professionals get things going with a Bollywood-style group routine, before the remaining seven celebrities battle it out on the dance floor, hoping to impress the viewers and judges, whose decision is getting tougher each week. The results are tomorrow at 7.15pm.

8.15 Atlantis. The city remains vulnerable in the aftermath of the battle, so when a stranger offers salvation Ariadne finds him hard to resist. Jason fights for glory on the tournament ground.

9.00 Casualty. Ash is angered by a patient's lifestyle choice, Big Mac treats an old lady who has foiled a robbery and Ethan has a breakthrough.

9.50 The National Lottery Live. Jenni Falconer hosts the Lotto and Thunderball draws.

10.00 BBC News; Weather.

10.20 Match of the Day. Gary Lineker presents highlights of the latest Premier League clashes, including Sunderland v Chelsea and West Bromwich Albion v Arsenal; National Lottery Update.

11.50 The Football League Show. Manish Bhasin presents highlights and all the goals from the latest fixtures in the Championship, League One and League Two.

1.10 Weather for the Week Ahead. **1.15** BBC News.

BBC2

6.00 CBBC. **11.00** The Blue Planet. (R) **12.00** Rick Stein's Far Eastern Odyssey. (R) **1.00** Escape to the Country. (R) **2.00** Live Snooker: UK Championship. The second round continues at the Barbican Centre in York. **5.30** Restoring England's Heritage.

6.00 Natural World: Jungle Gremlins of Java. (R)

7.00 Flog It! Mark Stacey and Adam Partridge value items in Bangor, north Wales. (R)

8.00 Perry and Croft: Made in Britain. The celebration of comedy writing duo David Croft and Jimmy Perry continues with an examination of how their sitcoms chronicled British people's attitudes to love and sex.

8.30 Dad's Army. Sergeant Wilson inherits a title following the death of an elderly relative and joins the aristocracy – much to Mainwaring's annoyance. (R)

9.00 QI XL. Extended edition. Josh Widdicombe, Aisling Bea, Tony Hawks and Alan Davies attempt to answer Stephen Fry's range of fiendish questions on the topics of love and loveliness.

9.45 Tomorrow's Worlds: The Unearthly History of Science Fiction. Dominic Sandbrook examines sci-fi's obsession with alien invasion, from all-out assault to sinister hidden threats. He explores how it has reflected real-life anxieties – whether they be the challenge to Victorian imperial power in HG Wells's The War of the Worlds, the Cold War paranoia in Invasion of the Body Snatchers or more recent concerns about racism and immigration in 2009 movie District 9. He also celebrates one of the most famous alien invaders of all time – the Dalek. Featuring contributions by Doctor Who showrunner Steven Moffat and former star David Tennant, actor Richard Dreyfuss, Independence Day director Roland Emmerich and special effects supervisors Phil Tippett and Douglas Trumbull.

10.45 Intruders. Jack makes a gruesome discovery in his back garden, while Gary realises how to expose the corruption behind Qui Reverti, but it demands an unthinkable sacrifice.

11.30 Snooker: UK Championship.

12.20 Snooker: UK Championship Extra. **2.20** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: The Aquabats! Super Show! **6.25** Pat & Stan. (R) **6.35** Pat & Stan. (R) **6.40** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.50** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **7.05** Canimals. (R) **7.10** Canimals. (R) **7.20** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **7.25** Sooty. (R) **7.35** Mr Bean: The Animated Series. (R) **7.50** Matt Hatter Chronicles. **8.15** Horrid Henry. **8.30** The Munch Box. **9.25** Dinner Date. (R) **10.20** Murder, She Wrote. (R) **11.15** ITV News; Weather. **11.20** All Star Family Fortunes. (R) **12.05** Surprise Surprise. (R) **1.05** Doc Martin. (R) **2.05** Keep It in the Family. (R) **3.10 Film:** Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone. (2001) Fantasy adventure, starring Daniel Radcliffe.

6.00 Regional Programme; Weather.

6.15 ITV News; Weather.

6.30 New You've Been Framed! Comedy from the mind of Harry Hill, inspired by viewers' videos, featuring a squirrel stealing a smartphone, a fox attacking a golfer and the Smurf who falls victim to a toddler.

7.00 The Chase: Celebrity Special. Chat-show host Jonathan Ross, comedienne and writer Katy Brand, Watchdog's Chris Hollins and model Jo Wood take on a trivia expert for charity. Bradley Walsh asks the questions.

8.00 The X Factor. The aspiring pop stars hope to turn another week of rehearsals into a winning performance as they battle for places in next week's semi-final. Judges Simon Cowell, Cheryl Fernandez-Versini, Mel B and Louis Walsh listen out for flat notes as the contestants face their most important performances yet. Will any of them disappoint at this crucial stage of the competition? Dermot O'Leary is the host. The results are tomorrow at 8pm.

9.45 I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here! Ant and Dec present all the highs and lows from the past 24 hours in the Australian jungle as the campmates spend another day battling bugs and Bushtucker Trials.

10.50 The Jonathan Ross Show. The host chats to James McAvoy, Phillip Schofield, Sarah Millican, Jessica Ennis-Hill and Barry Manilow, who also performs.

11.55 ITV News; Weather.**12.15 Film:** Coogan's Bluff. (1968) **1.50** Jackpot247. **3.00** The Jeremy Kyle Show USA. (R) **3.45** ITV Nightscreen.

CHANNEL 4

6.15 Snowman Triathlon. **6.40** Cycling: Revolution Series. **7.40** A Day at the Races. (R) **7.55** The Morning Line. **9.00** Weekend Kitchen. **10.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **10.30** Frasier. (R) **11.00** The Big Bang Theory. **11.30** The Big Bang Theory. **11.55** The Simpsons. (R) **12.25** Marvel's Agents of SHIELD. (R) **1.25** Channel 4 Racing. Live coverage from Newbury and Newcastle. **4.00** Come Dine with Me. (R) **4.25** Come Dine with Me. (R) **5.00** Come Dine with Me. (R) **5.25** Come Dine with Me. (R)

6.00 Come Dine with Me. (R)

6.30 Channel 4 News.

7.00 Woolly Mammoth: The Autopsy. The discovery of an extraordinarily well-preserved woolly mammoth in Siberia last year has quickened the pace of one of the most ambitious and controversial projects in science – the cloning of this iconic giant of the Ice Age. When it was dug out of the permafrost, a dark red liquid oozed from the frozen body. Could it be blood? This documentary follows an international team of experts carrying out a historic autopsy on the carcass and gains access to the leading mammoth de-extinction programmes happening now in the US and South Korea. (R)

8.00 Walking Through History: England's Last Battle – West Country. Tony Robinson hikes up from Lyme Regis in Dorset to the Somerset Levels telling the story of the 1685 Monmouth Rebellion, an attempt to overthrow James II. Last in the series.

9.00 Film: The Inbetweeners Movie. (2011) Awkward teenagers Simon, Will, Jay and Neil plan a holiday to the Greek island of Crete after they finish their exams, hoping to experience drink, sex and debauchery beyond their wildest dreams. However, things do not quite work out as planned. Comedy, with Joe Thomas, Simon Bird, James Buckley and Blake Harrison.

11.00 Film: The Sitter. (2011) Premiere. An irresponsible babysitter leads his three charges through a series of dangerous adventures on New York's mean streets. Comedy, starring Jonah Hill.

12.40 Film: Boomerang. (1992) **2.40** Hollyoaks. (R) **4.40** SuperScrimpers. (R) **5.00** Location, Location, Location. (R) **5.55** NFL: Rush Zone.

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! **10.00** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) **10.35** Access. **10.40** Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away. (R) **11.40 Film:** Lost at Christmas. (2007) Fact-based drama, starring Dylan Walsh and Jami Gertz. **1.25 Film:** The March Sisters at Christmas. (2012) Premiere. Drama, starring Julie Marie Berman. **3.10 Film:** I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus. (2002) Family comedy, starring Connie Sellecca. **5.00 Film:** A Fairytale Christmas. (2013) Premiere. Romantic drama, starring C Thomas Howell and Haylie Duff.

6.45 5 News Weekend.

6.50 Film: The Bridge at Remagen. (1969) As Allied forces prepare for a major assault on Germany, a small unit of American soldiers is sent to capture a strategically important bridge over the Rhine – but German forces are determined to prevent the Allied advance, and seek to destroy it. Second World War adventure, starring George Segal, Robert Vaughn, Ben Gazzara and Bradford Dillman. Edited for language and violence.

9.00 Film: The Expendables. (2010) A mercenary leads his elite team on a mission to assassinate a South American dictator, only to find their target is merely a pawn and the real power in the country is a rogue CIA agent. Feeling they have been double-crossed, they abandon the operation – but are compelled to return and save a captured rebel. Action thriller, directed by and starring Sylvester Stallone. With Jason Statham and Jet Li.

11.10 Film: War. (2007) An FBI agent is drawn into warfare between Yakuza and Triad gangs as he seeks revenge on the assassin who murdered his partner. Martial arts thriller, with Jet Li.

1.10 SuperCasino. Viewers get the chance to take part in live interactive gaming, with a mix of roulette-wheel spins and lively chat from the presenting team. **3.10** Gotham. Gordon informs Essen he plans to arrest Falcone and the mayor, while a killer is sent into police HQ to murder the detective after Fish Mooney discovers Cobblepot is still alive. (R) **4.00** House Doctor. Ann Maurice shows homeowners near Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, how to inject a touch of character into their bland property to make it more appealing. (R) **4.25** Make It Big. (R) **5.15** Angels of Jarm. (R) **5.40** Roary the Racing Car. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three
7.00 International Rugby Union **8.00** Top Gear **9.00** Sherlock **10.30** Live at the Apollo **11.00** Family Guy **1.35** Some Girls **2.05** Live at the Apollo **2.35** Life Is Toff **3.05** Sweat the Small Stuff **3.35** Fried **4.00** Close

BBC Four
7.00 Ice Age Giants **8.00** Sex and Sensibility: The Allure of Art Nouveau **9.00** Inspector Montalbano **10.40** Imagine: Dame Shirley Bassey: The Girl from Tiger Bay **11.40** Shirley Bassey at the BBC **12.40** Top of the Pops: 1979 **1.15** Sounds of the 70s **1.45** Ice Age Giants **2.45** Sex and Sensibility: The Allure of Art Nouveau **3.45** Close

ITV2
11.30 Film: Free Willy 3: The Rescue (1997) **1.20 Film:** Small Soldiers (1998) **3.30 Film:** Rumor Has It (2005) **5.30** You've Been Framed! **6.00** I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here! **7.00 Film:** The Perfect Storm (2000) **9.45** The Xtra Factor **10.50** I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here Now! **11.50** The X Factor **1.40** The Xtra Factor **2.35** Example: The Hot Desk **2.45** Teleshopping

ITV3
12.50 Film: Columbo: Swan Song (1974) **2.55** A Touch of Frost **4.55** Agatha Christie's Marple **6.55** Rosemary & Thyme **8.00** Doc Martin **9.00** Foyle's War **11.00** A Touch of Frost **12.40** Bomb Girls **1.30** World Kitchen **1.55** ITV3 Nightscreen **2.30** Teleshopping

ITV4
12.45 Live Darts. The Players Championship. **5.00** Cheers **5.30** Storage Wars **7.00** Live Darts. The Players Championship. **11.00 Film:** Green Street (2005) **1.10** River Monsters: Untold Stories **2.15** Black Gold **3.00** Teleshopping

E4
11.00 Melissa & Joey **12.00** How I Met Your Mother **1.00 Film:** Mighty Joe Young (1998) **3.15** Rude(ish) Tube Shorts **3.30** Made in Chelsea **4.30** Melissa & Joey **5.30** How I Met Your Mother **6.00** The Big Bang Theory **9.00 Film:** Skyline (2010) **10.50** The Inbetweeners Top 10 Moments **11.55** The Inbetweeners Go Global **1.00** Rude Tube **2.00** The Inbetweeners Top 10 Moments **2.55** How I Met Your Mother

Film4
11.00 Gunman's Walk (1958) **1.00** Fool's Gold (2008) **3.10** Flight of the Phoenix (2004) **5.20** Meet Dave (2008) **7.15** Bride Wars (2009) **9.00** The Taking of Pelham 123 (2009) **11.05** Watchmen (2009) **2.15** Rec 3: Genesis (2012)

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Jimmy Carr

Jimmy Carr: Laughing & Joking
(Channel 4, 10pm)

You may be surprised to know that there's a lot more to Jimmy Carr than a silly laugh and borderline offensive humour. Plenty more. Credit where credit is due after all: this man is a comedy genius with writing skills to boot – he's even penned material for Lily Savage, Bo Selecta! and Meet Ricky Gervais before now. However, for those who are more than familiar with Jimmy's work and aren't satisfied with his year-round tours and television efforts in that they're just not enough to satisfy your cravings, you'll no doubt be pleased to see that he's back on our screens tonight as, filmed in November of last year at London's Hammersmith Apollo, the award-winning funnyman performs his eighth live show.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **7.25** Match of the Day. (R) **9.00** The Andrew Marr Show. **10.00** Fern Britton Meets Donny Osmond. **11.00** Sunday Politics. **12.15** MOTD2 Extra. With Mark Chapman and the Match of the Day team. **1.00** BBC News; Weather. **1.15** Bargain Hunt. **2.15** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **3.15** Escape to the Country. (R) **4.15** Songs of Praise. **4.50** Life Story. (R) **5.50** BBC News; Regional News; Weather.

6.15 Countryfile. The team reports from Lancashire, where John Craven uncovers a landscape that was once a true spectacle, but is now almost lost to the ravages of time.

7.15 Strictly Come Dancing: The Results. Tess Daly and Claudia Winkleman reveal which couples are in the dance-off, and there are performances by Andre Rieu with Alfie Boe, and the Lord of the Dance troupe.

8.00 Antiques Roadshow. Fiona Bruce and the experts return to Towneley Hall near Burnley in Lancashire, where items include a collection of cut-throat razors, a mosaic and Lone Ranger memorabilia.

9.00 Remember Me. Care worker Hannah goes to visit Tom in hospital and is shocked to hear he has escaped, so detective Rob Fairholme opens a missing persons investigation. Hannah pleads with him to search in Scarborough, haunted by the old folk songs she found in the pensioner's house, but the detective isn't convinced by her hunch and continues his search closer to home. Visiting Tom's home, he finds the ripped photo of the man as a boy - as well as documents revealing he once had a wife who was killed in tragic circumstances. Meanwhile, the post-mortem on social worker Alison Denning proves inconclusive – but oddly, it does show that the dead woman had water in her lungs.

10.00 BBC News; Regional News; Weather.

10.30 Match of the Day 2. Southampton v Manchester City and Tottenham Hotspur v Everton.

11.30 The Apprentice. The entrepreneurs head to the Royal Bath & West Show. (R)

12.30 Film: Color of Night. (1994) **2.25** Weather for the Week Ahead. **2.30** BBC News.

BBC2

6.00 This Is BBC Two. **6.15** Great British Garden Revival. (R) **7.15** Countryfile. (R) **8.15** Glorious Gardens from Above. (R) **9.00** The Football League Show. (R) **10.20** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. **11.50** James Martin: Home Comforts. (R) **12.20** International Rugby Union. **1.20** Live Snooker: UK Championship. **5.30** Glorious Gardens from Above. (R)

6.15 Flog It! Charlie Ross and Mark Stacey value collectibles in Monmouth, Wales, and Paul Martin explores the countryside that inspired Laura Ashley's designs. (R)

7.00 Secrets of the Castle with Ruth, Peter and Tom. The team explores the art of medieval combat and the construction of a castle's defences, examining the ingenious features 13th-century builders came up with to withstand attacks. (R)

8.00 The Mekong River with Sue Perkins. The comedienne concludes her epic journey along the Southeast Asian river as she follows the Mekong through China to its source in the Himalayas. Last in the series.

9.00 World's Greatest Food Markets. Billingsgate merchant Roger Barton pits himself against traders at New Delhi's Azadpur fruit and vegetable market, which provides food for the whole of India. Last in the series.

10.00 Russell Howard's Good News. The comedian offers his perspective on stories dominating the media, whether on television, online or in print, and he is joined by a guest with an amazing tale to tell. (R)

10.30 The Wrong Mans. Sam and Phil take a wounded Marat to Phil's house, but with MI5 agent Smoke closing in on them, the hapless duo find they have become high-profile fugitives. (R)

11.00 The Wrong Mans. Sam and Phil realise they must put themselves right in the line of fire to expose the plot, save Bracknell, uncover double agents and rescue their loved ones. Last in the series. (R)

11.30 Snooker: UK Championship. Hazel Irvine presents highlights of the evening session from the Barbican Centre in York.

12.20 Snooker: UK Championship Extra. Extended highlights from today's matches. **2.20** Sign Zone: Countryfile. (R) **3.20** Holby City. (R) **4.20** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: The Aquabats! Super Show! **6.25** Pat & Stan. (R) **6.35** Pat & Stan. (R) **6.40** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.50** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **7.05** Canimals. (R) **7.10** Canimals. (R) **7.20** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **7.25** Sooty. (R) **7.35** Mr Bean: The Animated Series. (R) **7.50** Ultimate Spider-Man. **8.15** Horrid Henry. **8.30** Big Time Rush. **9.00** The Aquabats! Super Show! (R) **9.25** Dickinson's Real Deal. (R) **10.25** Murder, She Wrote. (R) **11.25** ITV News; Weather. **11.35 Film:** Carry On Again Doctor. (1969) **1.20** The Unforgettable Pat Phoenix. (R) **1.55** All Star Family Fortunes. (R) **2.55** The X Factor. (R) **4.40** Midsomer Murders. (R)

6.30 Regional Programme; Weather.

6.45 ITV News; Weather.

7.00 Keep It in the Family. With this year's series of I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here! well under way, six former residents of the jungle – Katie Price, Helen Flanagan, Joe Pasquale, Joe Swash, Kim Woodburn and Sinitta – provide assistance as two families go head to head in a series of fun-filled rounds. The stars each hold the clue to a big prize, from new cars to holidays in the sun, and face being sent through a trapdoor as the contestants decide whether to swap, drop or keep it in the family. Bradley Walsh hosts. Last in the series.

8.00 The X Factor Results. The remaining contestants wait with bated breath as Dermot O'Leary reveals who is safe and which acts will be battling it out in the sing-off for a place in next week's semi-final.

9.00 I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here! Ant and Dec interview today's eliminated contestant about their time in the camp, their jungle likes and dislikes, and who they are tipping to win. But before that, the Geordie duo present the usual round-up of highlights from the past 24 hours as the celebrities struggle through another day of hardship in the bug-infested Australian wilderness.

10.05 ITV News; Weather.

10.20 The Cube. (R)

11.20 Premiership Rugby Union. Highlights of the latest top-flight fixtures.

12.10 The Store. **2.30** Motorsport UK. **3.20** The Jeremy Kyle Show USA. (R) **4.05** ITV Nightscreen. **5.05** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R)

CHANNEL 4

6.20 NFL: The American Football Show. (R) **7.15** How I Met Your Mother. (R) **7.40** How I Met Your Mother. (R) **8.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.25** Frasier. (R) **8.55** Jamie's Comfort Food. (R) **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **12.30** George Clarke's Amazing Spaces. (R) **1.35** The Big Bang Theory. **2.05** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **2.35** The Simpsons. (R) **3.05** The Simpsons. (R) **3.35 Film:** Inkheart. (2008) Fantasy adventure, starring Brendan Fraser. **5.45 Film:** Ice Age: Dawn of the Dinosaurs. (2009) Animated adventure sequel, with the voice of John Leguizamo.

7.30 Channel 4 News.

8.00 The Great Wall of China: The Hidden Story – Secret History. With access to the first nationwide survey and state-of-the-art drones mapping the Great Wall of China, this documentary offers new evidence that reveals its extraordinary magnitude, rewrites its millennia-long history and decodes its complex signals system. Using cutting-edge chemistry, the programme also finds out what has kept the wall standing for so long – a simple cooking ingredient found in kitchens across the world.

9.00 Homeland. As the CIA thriller continues, Carrie organises a last-ditch operation, while Lockhart and Martha do their utmost to stall Inter-Services Intelligence. Claire Danes, Mandy Patinkin, Tracy Letts and Laila Robins star.

10.00 Jimmy Carr: Laughing & Joking. Stand-up comedy with the host of 8 Out of 10 Cats, recorded at London's Hammersmith Apollo in November last year, featuring his familiar brand of near-the-knuckle humour.

11.05 Alan Carr: Chatty Man. Comedian and actor Russell Brand talks about his new book Revolution, and French DJ superstar David Guetta discusses his latest single. With music from Kiesza. (R)

12.05 Confessions of a Doctor. Eight doctors lift the lid on their working lives in the consulting room. (R) **1.05** According to Jim. (R) **1.25** American Football Live. Kansas City Chiefs v Denver Broncos (Kick-off 1.30am). Coverage of the week 13 fixture from Arrowhead Stadium, where the AFC West rivals face each other. **4.45** Snowman Triathlon. Action from Snowdonia National Park. (R) **5.10** Win It Cook It. (R) **5.35** Countdown. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake!: Peppa Pig. **6.05** Roary the Racing Car. (R) **6.15** Angelina Ballerina. (R) **6.30** Bert and Ernie's Great Adventures. (R) **6.35** Seaside Antics. **6.40** The Mr Men Show. (R) **6.50** Chloe's Closet. (R) **7.05** Olly the Little White Van. (R) **7.10** Bananas in Pyjamas. (R) **7.25** Make Way for Noddy. (R) **7.35** Paw Patrol. **7.50** Pip Ahoy! (R) **8.00** Little Princess. (R) **8.10** The Adventures of Bottle Top Bill and His Best Friend Corky. (R) **8.25** Wanda and the Alien. **8.35** Zack and Quack. **8.50** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **9.05** Jelly Jamm. (R) **9.20** LazyTown. (R) **9.50** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) **10.25** Access. (R) **10.30** Police Interceptors. (R) **11.25** Police Interceptors. (R) **12.25** Police Interceptors. (R) **1.30 Film:** Noel. (2004) Drama, starring Susan Sarandon. **3.20 Film:** Matchmaker Santa. (2012) Romantic comedy, with Lacey Chabert and Adam Mayfield. **5.00 Film:** Annie Claus Is Coming to Town. (2011) Christmas fantasy, starring Maria Thayer.

6.45 5 News Weekend.

6.50 Film: Planet of the Apes. (2001) An astronaut crash-lands on a strange planet and is captured and enslaved by the ruling race of highly intelligent apes. Luckily, he is helped by a sympathetic chimpanzee – but then discovers a shocking secret. Remake of the 1960s sci-fi adventure, directed by Tim Burton and starring Mark Wahlberg, Helena Bonham Carter and Tim Roth, and featuring a cameo appearance from the original film's star Charlton Heston. Edited for language.

9.00 Film: The Expendables 2. (2012) Premiere. Mercenary leader Barney Ross is recruited by the CIA to recover a top-secret package, only to come to blows with a rival band of hired guns. Barney swears revenge when the other faction kill his protege, and leads his men on a mission to stop their enemies taking over a former Soviet nuclear facility. Action thriller sequel, starring Sylvester Stallone.

11.05 Film: Universal Soldier. (1992) Two dead soldiers reanimated in a military experiment recognise each other as old enemies and pursue their vendettas. Sci-fi thriller, with Jean-Claude Van Damme and Dolph Lundgren.

1.05 SuperCasino. **3.10** The Gadget Show. (R) **4.00** House Doctor. (R) **4.20** Make It Big. (R) **5.15** Angels of Jarm. (R) **5.40** Roary the Racing Car. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three

7.00 Great TV Mistakes **8.00** Doctor Who **9.00** Edinburgh Comedy Fest Live 2012 **10.00** Family Guy **10.45** American Dad! **11.30** Some Girls **12.00** Life Is Toff **12.30** Edinburgh Comedy Fest Live 2012 **1.30** Sweat the Small Stuff **2.00** The Revolution Will Be Televised

BBC Four

7.00 The Great War **7.40** Britain's Wild Places **8.00** The Day of the Triffids **9.00** Blondie: One Way or Another **10.10 Film:** Ca$h (2008) **11.50** Pink Floyd: Wish You Were Here **12.50** Play it Loud: The Story of the Marshall Amp **1.50** Great Guitar Riffs at the BBC

ITV2

11.30 The X Factor **1.25** The Xtra Factor **2.25** Kiesza: The Hot Desk **2.40 Film:** Nanny McPhee and the Big Bang (2010) **4.50** I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here! **5.50 Film:** She's the Man (2006) **8.00** Scorpion **9.00** The Xtra Factor **10.05** I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here Now! **11.05** Educating Joey Essex: Space Cadet **12.05** Two and a Half Men **1.00** Dads **1.25** Fake Reaction **2.00** The Vampire Diaries **2.45** Kiesza: The Hot Desk

ITV3

11.20 A Touch of Frost **1.35 Film:** Columbo: Negative Reaction (1974) **3.40 Film:** The Nun's Story (1959) **6.45** Inspector Morse **9.00** Lewis **11.00** Wycliffe **12.10 Film:** The Elephant Man (1980) **2.20** Judge Judy **3.05** ITV3 Nightscreen **3.40** Emmerdale

ITV4

12.45 Live Darts. **5.00** Alias Smith and Jones **6.00** Cheers **6.35** World of Sport: Dare Devils **6.45** Live Darts. The Players Championship. **11.00 Film:** Rambo: First Blood Part II (1985) **1.00** Minder **2.00** Jean-Claude Van Damme: Behind Closed Doors **3.00** Teleshopping

E4

12.30 Made in Chelsea **1.30** How I Met Your Mother **2.00 Film:** Chalet Girl (2011) **3.55** Rude(ish) Tube Shorts **4.00** Melissa & Joey **5.30** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **6.30** The Big Bang Theory **9.30** The Inbetweeners: Their Favourite Episodes **11.45** The Inbetweeners Go Global **12.50** Drifters **1.25** Bad Robots **1.55** New Girl **2.45** Rules of Engagement

Film4

11.00 Broken Lance (1954) **1.00** Bride and Prejudice (2004) **3.15** Ramona and Beezus (2010) **5.20** Scrooged (1988) **7.15** Airplane! (1980) **9.00** The Cold Light of Day (2012) **10.55** Premonition (2007) **12.50** A Story of Children and Film (2013) **3.05** Close

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- Walkers Shortbread Rounds, 100g
- Walkers Nonsuch Hazelnut Toffee, 100g
- Twinings English Breakfast Tea, 10 pkt

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☐ **New Zealand Luxury – £54.75**
- Hardys Brut Reserve Sparkling Wine, 750ml
- Whittings Christmas Fruit Cake, 500g
- Whittings Christmas Pudding, 400g
- Napoli Hazelnut Crème Filled Wafers, 120g
- Carrs Water Crackers, 125g
- Figaro Olives with Pimentos, 142g
- Mackays Cranberry Sauce, 227g
- Gardiners Malt Whiskey Fudge, 150g
- Stern's Pfeffernüsse Traditional Gingerbread Cookies, 200g
- Soletti Pretzel Sticks, 80g
- Twinings English Breakfast Tea,10 pkt
- Vittoria Espresso Coffee, 50g

North American Hampers

(Excludes Alaska and Hawaii)

☐ **USA Food – £47.75**
☐ **Canadian Food – £47.75**
- Twinings English Breakfast Tea (20s)
- Rademaker Chocolate Mint Sticks, 75g
- Royal Edinburgh Shortbread Fingers, 125g
- Borges Green Olives with Pimento, 125ml
- Carr's Water Crackers, 125g
- Walkers Toffee and Pecan Biscuits, 150g
- Weston's Traditional Fruit Cake, 600g

☐ **USA Luxury – £54.75**
☐ **Canadian Luxury – £54.75**
- Baxters Chicken Broth, 540ml
- Royal Edinburgh Shortbread Fingers, 125g
- Waterbridge Occasions Choc. Toffee, 150g
- Waterbridge Fudge Butter, 200g
- Waterbridge Slimstix Dark Mint, 75g
- Bassetts Liquorice Allsorts, 200g
- McVities Digestives, 400g
- Robertson's Scotch & Orange Marmalade, 250ml
- Emelia's Blueberry Chutney, 250ml
- Carr's Water Crackers, 125g
- Weston's Traditional Fruit Cake, 600g

Should a listed item become unavailable, a substitution of equal or greater value will be made

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Send the hamper(s) as indicated in the boxes above, which total £_ _ _.__ _ _
Please include ..... Christmas Stocking(s) @ £16.00 each £_ _ _.__ _ _
Please include ..... New Year Bubbly(s) @ £18.00 each £_ _ _.__ _ _
I enclose total remittance for £_ _ _.__ _ _

Visa/Mastercard number _ _ _ _ /_ _ _ _ /_ _ _ _ /_ _ _ _
Expiry date _ _ /_ _ Security no _ _ _ Signature.....

Please use CAPITALS
Sender's details
FROM: Title.....First Name.....
Surname.....
Address.....
.....
Postcode.....
Daytime No. .....

DELIVER TO: Title.....First Name.....
Surname.....
Address (No P.O Box addresses).....
.....
Town/City.....
State.....
Post/zip code.....
Country.....
Daytime No. .....
A post/zip code and daytime telephone number must be included

Your message (Please use CAPITALS - max 15 words).....
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FILM CHOICES

MONDAY
The National Tree, Channel 5, 3.15pm
A loving father plants a tree the day his son is born. Years later, when the boy is a teenager, it is selected to be the national Christmas tree, so father and son embark on a life-changing journey across the country to deliver it for replanting at the White House. Drama, starring Andrew McCarthy and Evan Williams. (2009)

TUESDAY
Public Enemies, ITV, 10.40pm
Fact-based crime drama following the last years of John Dillinger, whose run of bank robberies and daring prison escapes in the 1930s make him both America's most wanted criminal and a hero to a public struggling through the Depression. His career is soon to be cut short by the birth of the FBI, which assigns its most celebrated agent to bring him to justice. Directed by Michael Mann and starring Johnny Depp, Christian Bale and Marion Cotillard. (2009)



We Own the Night, Friday, ITV, 11.15pm

WEDNESDAY
The 13th Warrior, BBC1, 12.10am
A disgraced nobleman exiled from his Baghdad home joins forces with Norse warriors at the close of the first millennium, and ends up battling seemingly invincible attackers during an epic journey. Action adventure adapted from the novel Eaters of the Dead by Michael Crichton, starring Antonio Banderas, Diane Venora, Dennis Storhi, Vladimir Kulich and Omar Sharif. (1999)

THURSDAY
Die Another Day, ITV, 10.40pm
James Bond is suspended from duty after being taken hostage in North Korea, but goes against orders to track down those who betrayed him. During the pursuit of the terrorist he was investigating before his capture, he discovers a connection with a British billionaire who has constructed a devastating orbital weapon. Spy adventure, starring Pierce Brosnan. (2002)

FRIDAY
We Own the Night, ITV, 11.15pm
The manager of a New York nightclub is caught between two worlds – while his brother and father are both highly respected police officers, most of his clientele are gangsters. Despite his best efforts not to get involved, he is forced to choose sides when gang violence escalates and his sibling is targeted by a hitman. Crime drama, starring Joaquin Phoenix, Mark Wahlberg and Robert Duvall. (2007)

PICK OF THE WEEK

New series proves to be a breeze for Richard

Fashion may come and go, but one constant in the UK is our obsession with the weather. Maybe it's the fact that as an island so small we don't generate our own weather systems but have to make do with cast-offs from other countries.

In a new series, Richard Hammond will be revealing the hidden secrets at the heart of some of the world's most extreme weather, experiencing extraordinary phenomena first-hand.

Okay, some of the dialogue may be a little redundant, such as "Wherever you live on the planet, weather shapes your world."

That aside, Hammond will be 'stripping weather back to its basics,' and in this wind-centric opener he explains how wind begins.

He kicks things off with another spot of slightly awkward dialogue: "There is a powerful, invisible force that moves around us, almost unnoticed…"

Hmmm. While the script could have done with more levity in the Top Gear vein, WWWRH excels in the visuals department, whether it's glorious high definition cloudscapes or obligatory shots of devastation.

There are some scenes which look like a mash up of Twister and The Dark Knight as Hammond attempts to measure the speed of a tornado.

His journey starts in New Hampshire, USA.

You might think of the region as a world of sunshine, russet leaves in the autumn and moneyed Americans enjoying expensive past times.

However, the state can also look like something from the Arctic as Hammond discovers when he braves temperatures of -45C on top of Mount Washington.

On April 12, 1934, the local weather station measured one of the fastest wind speeds ever recorded on land: 231mph.

Remarkably, winds in the area hit hurricane force more than 100 days in the year.

Going outside is not advisable unless you're covered from head to toe in well insulated protective gear. And don't forget your goggles, unless you want frozen eyeballs.

Given the fact a light wind on your face measures around 5mph; 15mph is enough to turn an umbrella inside out; 45mph can wreck a garden fence, and 55mph can bring a shed down, the sight of Hammond in 65 to 85mph winds is enough to make you put an extra bar on the fire.

A good job there's subtitles as our host struggles to get his words out. Just a pity he doesn't tie his hat on.

Later, there's an experiment to create a fire whirlwind, and a tense moment when it looks like a pricey camera may have been lost in the vertical inferno.

Clearly a glutton for punishment, Richard decides to stand in the middle of a man-made tornado at the 'WindEEE' Research Institute in Canada. It's the only place on Earth which can duplicate the dynamics of a tornado.

Little wonder Hammond gets goosebumps, and not just because he's a bit chilly.

If this leaves you hungry for more, don't miss next week's edition when 'Hamster' attempts to capture a cloud in the hope of seeing how much it weighs. Yes, really.



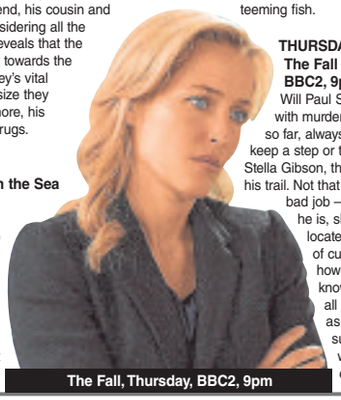
Wild Weather with Richard Hammond, Monday, BBC1, 9pm

BEST OF THE REST

MONDAY
The British Property Boom
Channel 4, 8pm
House prices have been rising at record speeds around the UK, and naturally that has far-reaching effects for many of us. This week's show investigates the impact on buyers and sellers, with first-time buyers such as Dionne used as an example of how hard it can be to get on the property ladder. She faces having to ask her retired mother, Denise, to sell the family home to stand a chance of buying her own home. We also meet Barbara, a Hackney resident who has been priced out of the area where she was born. Plus, there's a look at some of the overseas buyers purchasing investment flats in the capital that could otherwise have been snapped up by locals. And if you're wondering what the smallest house on the market in London will cost, then brace yourselves. A property measuring just six feet wide is on the market for a whopping £235,000.

TUESDAY
Autopsy: The Last Hours of Elvis Presley
Channel 5, 9pm
Dr Richard Shepherd has been linked to some of the most iconic celebrities in history – it's just a shame that none of them are alive to enjoy his company. The forensic pathologist is now famous for his in-depth televised autopsies in which he analyses the untimely deaths of famous folk notorious for their often self-inflicted ill health. Tonight, as the title suggests, he kicks of this new series by focusing on Elvis Presley. Robert picks through the facts surrounding the singer's demise at his Memphis home Graceland in August 1977, using accounts from his best friend, his cousin and his private nurse, as well as considering all the medical facts. The programme reveals that the post-mortem report showed that towards the end of his life, nearly all of Presley's vital organs were almost double the size they should have been, and what's more, his system was full of prescription drugs.

WEDNESDAY
Living on the Edge: Blood in the Sea
Channel 5, 7pm
New series. Anthropologist and adventurer Chris Terrill travels to the world's most extreme environments to find out how and why people live in the grip of nature at its harshest. In the first edition, he heads to Mauritania to spend time with fishermen who work the rich but dangerous waters off the north-west coast of Africa. Travelling from Nouadhibou in the north to the capital Nouakchott in the south, Chris and his interpreter Ahmed Taleb witness the sight of a thousand boats fighting to get through the violent surf as it breaks on to the beaches and also discover a secret paradise where the desert meets the sea and millions of birds feed on the teeming fish.



The Fall, Thursday, BBC2, 9pm

THURSDAY
The Fall
BBC2, 9pm
Will Paul Spector get away with murder? He has done so far, always managing to keep a step or two ahead of Stella Gibson, the detective on his trail. Not that she's doing a bad job – she knows who he is, she just can't locate this slipperiest of customers. He, however, seems to know where she is all the time – and as a result, Gibson suspects he's witnessed her confrontation with Burns in her hotel room. But how will Burns react when she tells him? As if the idea of Spector keeping tabs on her isn't disturbing enough, she then realises he's been visiting one of his surviving victims in hospital – but this fact allows her to finally set up a surveillance operation on him. But the need to find the evidence that will bring about Spector's arrest intensifies when a body matching the description of Rose Stagg is discovered.

FRIDAY
The Martin Lewis Money Show
ITV, 8pm
For a man who's become synonymous with great money saving ideas, you'd think Martin Lewis would be on a par with some of the cash-hungry wannabes in The Apprentice, but not a bit of it. "I certainly don't preach about how to make money; that's not really my thing at all, or my passion to be honest," he explains. "I still don't consider myself to be an entrepreneur. I'm somebody who set up a website and I consider myself to be a journalist and consumer campaigner." This week, Martin helps customers reclaim lost cash after switching energy suppliers. He also reveals how companies don't have to give this money back unless they are asked. Plus, the eponymous host reveals how to buy high-street fashion abroad, take a budget flight back to the UK and still make a saving.

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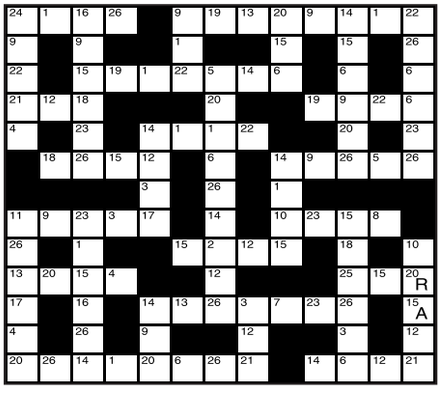
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BRAIN GYM No.301

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



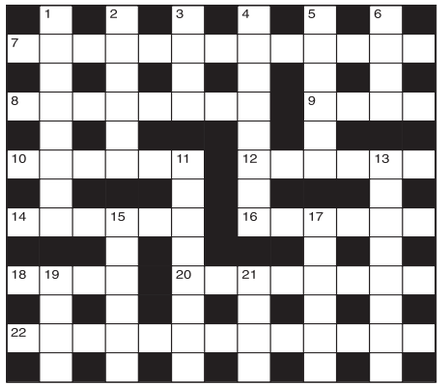
1	14
2	15 A
3	16
4	17
5	18
6	19
7	20 R
8	21
9	22
10	23
11	24
12	25
13	26

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
S	Y	D	M	V	C	R	H	K	Q	F	U	N
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
E	A	T	X	O	G	B	P	J	Z	W	L	I

Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.



Cryptic Clues:

Across

7. Very busy describing 22 Across perhaps (2,4,2,5)
8. An ironclad excuse for not buying luxuries (8)
9. They're neat! (4)
10. Take off a garment I'd first put on back-to-front (6)
12. Smart evergreen (6)
14. Such games are not openly played (6)
16. Ring again to cancel (6)
18. It has caused many deaths in Vietnam (4)
20. Pains grip sick Greek hero (8)
22. It was frightful, as a rule! (5,2,6)

Down

1. Perform the state a monetary service (8)
2. It's entertainment value is questionable (6)
3. Become engaged in some sharp practice (4)
4. He works so that others may play (8)
5. Disturbance of increasing volume (6)
6. On which many initial declarations of love have been made (4)
11. He fights in the ring (8)
13. Does she preach no involvement? (8)
15. Royal house that is divided internally, naturally (6)
17. Comrade has an attempt not worth considering (6)
19. Not now the capital of Norway (4)
21. Has old fashioned style (4)

Quick Clues:

Across

7. Speedily (13)
8. Lees (8)
9. Cistern (4)
10. Crash (4-2)
12. Drub (6)
14. Muscular (6)
16. Summary (6)
18. Snatch (4)
20. Innate (8)
22. Stupidity (13)

Down

1. Outside (8)
2. Yearn for (6)
3. Dreadful (4)
4. Despot (8)
5. Assemble (6)
6. Scheme (4)
11. Bodily (8)
13. Monotony (8)
15. Move unsteadily (6)
17. Powerful (6)
19. Space (4)
21. Conceal (4)

Sudoku

		9	5					8
2				7	9	3	5	
				8				7
	2		8				6	
9		8	7		3	2		
	4				1		7	
		3		9			1	
	5	6	2					9
1				5	7	4		

Fill in the grid below so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

6	3	4	5	8	1	2	9	7
5	8	7	2	3	9	4	1	6
2	1	9	6	4	7	5	8	3
7	5	3	4	1	8	9	6	2
1	9	2	3	7	6	8	4	5
8	4	6	9	2	5	7	3	1
3	2	8	1	5	4	6	7	9
9	7	5	8	6	3	1	2	4
4	6	1	7	9	2	3	5	8

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS:
CRYPTIC - Across: 1 Isis; 8 Conviction; 9 Drawback; 10 Magi; 12 Befell; 14 Please; 15 Dimple; 17 Theory; 18 Ages; 19 Bulletin; 21 Oppressors; 22 Eats. Down: 2 Shortening; 3 Scow; 4 On call; 5 Pick up; 6 Stampede; 7 Anti; 11 Go straight; 13 Exposure; 16 Emboss; 17 Tallow; 18 Atom; 20 Ease. QUICK - Across: 1 Seem; 8 Answer back; 9 Babyhood; 10 Camp; 12 Cajole; 14 Deride; 15 Billow; 17 Modern; 18 Snug; 19 Contrite; 21 Counteract; 22 Aunt. Down: 2 Excavation; 3 Many; 4 Ashore; 5 Needed; 6 Obscured; 7 Skip; 11 Moderation; 13 Obliging; 16 Wicked; 17 Manual; 18 Sick; 20 Rota.

Quiz

1. Name the famous showbiz parents of entertainer Liza Minnelli.
2. In which city was Christopher Columbus born?
3. Of which element is diamond a form?
4. What was the name of Donald Campbell's record-breaking boats and cars?
5. Of which ocean does the Kara Sea form a part?
6. What was the first nuclear-powered submarine?
7. Who, in 1956, was the first European Footballer of the Year?
8. Which musical instrument evolved from the sackbut?
9. To which family of birds do canaries and siskins belong?
10. Who was the first English actor to be knighted?

Last week's solutions:

Quiz: 1 Collie; 2 Colette; 3 Scottish; 4 Storm petrel; 5 Inner Hebrides; 6 Lulu; 7 Munich; 8 George II; 9 Gary Mabbutt; 10 William Randolph Hearst.

Niner: POLICEMAN

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

4823 gives a wild animal,
7851239 gives another wild animal,
26389278 gives a dog.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9



We've listened

Your local **Dudley & Wyre Forest edition** has returned on Saturday

We have listened to reader feedback and reintroduced the Express & Star Dudley & Wyre Forest edition on Saturday. You will notice significant improvements. Whilst retaining the 'Weekend' supplement, we have also included lots more local news, views and sports coverage.

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STOURBRIDGE, Orwell Close £800 pcm + Fees
A well presented 3 bedroom semi detached home featuring kitchen/diner, lounge, 2 double bedrooms and 1 single, family bathroom with shower, garage and car port. This property is also double glazed and centrally heated (both as spec.) Viewings highly recommended. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Longmoor Road £795 pcm + Fees
Large 3 bed mucklow style semi-detached property features: 2 reception rooms, 2 double bedrooms (master with fitted wardrobes), 1 single bedroom, modern bathroom with L-shaped bath, garage, driveway parking for multiple vehicles, gas central heated and double glazed. Ideally located for Huntingtree and Lutley Primary School. EPC: D



OLDBURY, The Dingle £775 pcm + Fees
1ST MONTHS RENT HALF PRICE! This detached house is situated just off the New Birmingham Road giving easy access to Birmingham, Wolverhampton and M5 motorway. This recently refurbished property features an open plan kitchen/lounge, fitted Kitchen with appliances, landing upstairs with enough space to create a study area or relaxation space, 4 large bedrooms, family bathroom with shower, off road parking for several cars, and a large garage. EPC: E



BIRMINGHAM, Orion Building £775 pcm + Fees
1ST MONTHS RENT FREE. A fantastic opportunity to rent a fully furnished apartment in the heart of Birmingham City Centre. This 1 bed modern property overlooking the Mailbox features open plan living with luxury kitchen with 24 hour concierge service, secure parking, double glazed and electric heating. Viewings highly recommended. EPC: TBC



AMBLECOTE, 41a High Street £760 pcm + Fees
A fantastic opportunity to rent a new build home on a select development. Featuring homes of 3 generous size bedrooms (master with en-suite) finished to an exceptional standard. Featuring spacious lounge/dining areas, well appointed kitchens, downstairs WC, 3 bedrooms with family bathrooms & master bedroom with en-suite, 2 allocated parking spaces, front & rear gardens. These homes will not be available for long. EPC: TBC



HALESOWEN, Hollybank Grove £695 pcm + Fees
Good size semi-detached property situated in a cul-de-sac position close to popular schools and local amenities. Features 3 bedrooms with fitted wardrobes, 2 reception rooms, family bathroom, fully fitted kitchen. Off road parking, gas central heating and double glazed. This house has been newly redecorated and recarpeted. EPC: E



KINGSWINFORD, Camberley Road £650 pcm + Fees
A very well presented semi detached property located on the popular High Acres Estate and offering extremely easy access to schools, shops and local amenities. Large lounge, fitted kitchen with appliances, lovely rear garden with decking area, 3 bedrooms, bathroom with shower, garage & driveway. Available immediately. EPC: D



ROWLEY REGIS, Spring Vale Road £650 pcm + Fees
1ST MONTHS RENT HALF PRICE! An opportunity to acquire a well maintained traditional detached property situated in a popular residential location in a quiet cul-de-sac close to local schools, amenities and road links. Featuring a large living room, fitted kitchen with a double range cooker, W.C, 2 double & 1 single bedroom/study, bathroom with shower, driveway/garage. A lovely property not to be missed. Minimum contract 12 months. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Linnet Close £575 pcm + Fees
Desirable cul-de-sac location. Situated in a very popular area of the Lodgefield Estate with easy access for Halesowen and Cradley Heath, this unfurnished semi detached house features gas central heating, spacious living room, fitted breakfast kitchen with appliances, 2 bedrooms with 1 having wardrobes, modern bathroom with shower, front & rear gardens and driveway parking. EPC: E



HALESOWEN, Haden Arch Court £575 pcm + Fees
1st MONTHS RENT HALF PRICE! Contemporary living in Halesowen. This 1st floor spacious apartment above the archway, within walking distance to Halesowen Town Centre and buses, the apartment features gas central heating, double glazing, open plan living room/fitted kitchen, 2 double bedrooms, bathroom with separate shower cubicle, allocated parking. EPC: B



NEW

HALESOWEN, Harden Court £550 pcm + Fees
This lovely and modern 1st floor apartment has come on the market and comes part furnished. Well worth an inspection. On a bus route to Halesowen and on a quiet road, comprising of: 2 double bedrooms with bedroom furniture, enormous lounge with sofas, fitted kitchen, house bathroom with `p` shaped bath and shower, double glazing, gas central heating. EPC: TBC



NEW PRICE

HALESOWEN, Talbot Street £550 pcm + Fees
Step inside this fantasic 3 bedroom terrace property. Renovated throughout within the last 6 months to a very high standard, featuring 2 great size reception rooms, modern fitted kitchen, fully tiled bathroom with electric shower, gas central heating system. EPC: E



NEW

HALESOWEN, Clifton Road £550 pcm + Fees
Modern end of terrace house in a very convenient location, fitted kitchen, large lounge, conservatory, easily maintained garden, 2 good size bedrooms & family bathroom, parking for 3 cars. Available immediately. EPC: C



ROWLEY REGIS, Glaslyn Avenue £540 pcm + Fees
Immaculately presented modern 2 bed ground floor apartment within walking distance to Blackheath Town Centre. This property features an open plan lounge/kitchen with fridge/freezer, family bathroom, master bedroom with fitted wardrobes and ensuite, allocated parking, double glazing and electric heating. Viewings highly recommended. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Olive Hill Road £525 pcm + Fees
This well presented 2 bed end terrace property features: 2 reception rooms, fitted kitchen with appliances, 2 double bedrooms and family bathroom, double glazing and gas central heating. Ideal for Olive Lane Primary School and also within walking distance to Blackheath Town Centre. Available early December. EPC: E



WORDSLEY, Brook Street £525 pcm + Fees
An unfurnished end terraced house, refurbished and extended comprising of: gas central heating, double glazing, lounge, fitted kitchen, 2 large bedrooms, bathroom with shower, driveway parking, rear garden. Available now. EPC: C



NEW

CRADLEY HEATH, Luanne Close £525 pcm + Fees
Situated in this popular residential area, is this 2nd floor apartment, which overlooks the canal and has its own balcony, comprising of: 2 bedrooms, spacious lounge, fitted kitchen, bathroom with shower, access to balcony from the master bedroom, gas central heating, double glazing, allocated parking. Well worth an inspection. EPC: C



NEW

NETHERTON, Round Street £475 pcm + Fees
Set in a quiet road, is this lovely semi-detached home. Featuring gas central heating, 1 reception room, fitted kitchen, 1 double and 1 single bedroom, bathroom with shower, rear garden and driveway parking for 2 cars. Popular residential street close to Netherton High Street. 2 months deposit and a guarantor is required. (THE GUARANTOR MUST BE A HOME OWNER, FAMILY MEMBER AND WORKING). EPC: D



CRADLEY HEATH, Wycherley Way £475 pcm + Fees
A well presented unfurnished ground floor apartment briefly comprising; living room, 1 double bedroom with fitted wardrobes and 1 single bedroom, bathroom with shower. Benefits include gas central heating, double glazing, communal gardens, parking space. Close to local amenities. EPC: C



NEW

CRADLEY HEATH, Sidaway Street £425 pcm + Fees
An unfurnished mid terraced house, close to old hill high street and close to local train station, comprising of: 2 reception rooms, 3 bedrooms, gas central heating, double glazing, fitted kitchen, bathroom, rear garden, on road parking. EPC: TBC



HALESOWEN, Somers Road £375 pcm + Fees
A 1 bedroom first floor apartment offering generous accommodation including: lounge with open plan kitchen, bedroom with en-suite shower room, double glazing, communal garden, on road parking, unfurnished. EPC: TBC

PROPERTY

Prime location near village for family home





A detached family residence in Gospel End Road, Sedgley, is within walking distance of the village centre.

It is for sale through Swinscoes at £249,950 with no chain. The property represents excellent value and offers flexible living space with accommodation comprising entrance hallway, lounge, an open plan and recently fitted dining kitchen, utility room, play room/sitting room and downstairs WC on the ground floor. On the first floor there are four bedrooms, two en suite shower rooms and a bathroom. For further information contact Swinscoes on 01902 672274 or visit the website at www.swinscoes.co.uk





This traditional semi has lovely views of parkland



IN a peaceful position, this traditional-style semi-detached home in Monument Avenue, Wollescote, in Stourbridge, has superb distant views over Stevens Park to the rear.

It is for sale through Jon Stanier at £179,950.

Having gas central heating and double glazing and stripped pine doors, this three-bedroomed property also has a white bathroom suite with a separate shower cubicle.

There is a hall, lounge, dining room, lobby, WC, kitchen with separate dining area and patio door, and there is a cellar.

An elevated terrace with has delightful parkland views and steps down to a garden.

Call the agents on (01384) 77877 or visit www.jonstanier.co.uk website.







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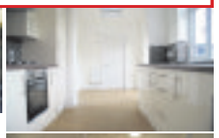
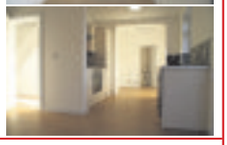


52 Holly Road
* Semi detached house
* Recently modernised
* Kitchen/dining room
* Three bedrooms
* Box room/study
* Small garage
* No upward chain EPC=D

£179,999

Oldbury

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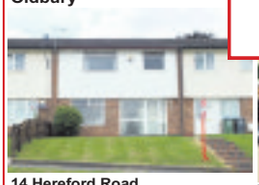




264 Pound Road
* Semi detached house
* Recently re-planned and modernised
* Re-fitted kitchen with breakfast area
* Two reception rooms
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* Re-fitted bathroom
* W.C/Utility
* Extensive rear garden
* Garage EPC=tbc

Offers in the region of £199,950

Oldbury

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14 Hereford Road
* Ideal first purchase
* Tastefully presented accommodation
* Fitted kitchen/dining room
* Through lounge
* Three bedrooms * Bathroom
* Enclosed gardens
* Gas boiler heating radiators
* Internal inspection recommended EPC = C

Offers in the region of £119,950

Halesowen



Manor Abbey Road
* NO UPWARD CHAIN
* Four bedrooms
* Re-fitted kitchen/dining room with fitted appliances * Through living room
* Re-fitted bathroom
* Ground floor shower room/wet room with WC
* Good sized rear garden
* Small garage (suitable for storage only) EPC=D

Offers in the region of £275,000

Quinton



Mayswood Grove
* Semi-detached house
* 3 bedrooms and bathroom
* Through living room and kitchen
* Utility room
* Store rooms with potential to provide extra living accommodation
* Gas boiler heating radiators
* Garden * Garage * Carport EPC=D

Offers in the region of £140,000

Halesowen



Manor Abbey Road
* Traditional style extended semi detached house
* Some general moernisation and improvement required
* Three bedrooms and bathroom
* Extended kitchen and lounge
* Separate dining room, utility and fitted cloakroom * Enclosed garden, double glazed windows, gas boiler heating radiators EPC=D

Offers in the region of £229,950

Halesowen



New John Street
* Brand new semi-detached bungalow
* Fitted kitchen with oven and hob
* 2 Bedrooms, shower room
* Lounge with French doors to gardens
* Double Glazed windows, gas boiler heating radiators
* Off road parking for two vehicles
* Completion anticipated March/April 2015 EPC=C

£135,000

Halesowen



Manor Lane
* Well presented traditional style semi detached house
* Three bedrooms
* Two reception rooms
* Re-fitted well appointed bathroom
* Lovely rear garden
* Views over 'Leasowes'
* NO UPWARD CHAIN EPC=D

Offers in the region of £249,950

Halesowen



Belgrave Road
* Mid terraced property
* Breakfast kitchen
* Three Bedrooms
* Garage
* EPC=C

Offers in the region of £137,950

Halesowen



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Plot 2, The Paddock
Hurst Green Road
* Brand new link detached bungalow
* Kitchen with host of appliances
* Two bedrooms
* Master bedroom with ensuite
* Fitted carpets
* EPC=C

£180,000

West Bromwich


TO LET

66 Margaret Street
* End-terraced house
* 2 double bedrooms
* 2 reception rooms
* Gas central heating
* Great location; affordable rent
* EPC=D

Monthly rent of £475+ application fee
£135 (inc VAT) 1st tenant and £100 (inc VAT) each additional tenant.
Deposit required 6 weeks rent.

Rowley Regis


TO LET

35 Duke Street
* semi detched house * 2 bedrooms
* UPVC doublazing to windows
* gas boiler/radiator heating system
* laminate floors to lounge and dining room
* Available now for 6 month tenancy
* EPC=E

Monthly rent of £475+ application fee
£135 (inc VAT) 1st tenant and £100 (inc VAT) each additional tenant.
Deposit required 6 weeks rent.

Halesowen


TO LET

27 Windmill Hill
* Contemporary styled modern house
* LOCATED ON MAIN BUS ROUTE
* 2 Bedrooms
* Fitted kitchen with apliances
* Dressing room & en-suite
* GAS CH & DG Windows
* EPC=C

Monthly rent of £525+ application fee
£135 (inc VAT) 1st tenant and £100 (inc VAT) each additional tenant.
Deposit required 6 weeks rent.

Oldbury


TO LET

115 Pottery Road
* Three Bedroom Semi-detached House
* Living Room Forming Lounge & Dining Area * Kitchen with oven, hob, extract, fridge & washing machine * Bathroom with Shower & Ensuite * Gas CH & DG windows * Enclosed Gardens * Off Road Parking * EPC=B * Available now!

Monthly rent of £675+ application fee
£135 (inc VAT) 1st tenant and £100 (inc VAT) each additional tenant.
Deposit required 6 weeks rent.

Rowley Regis


TO LET

17 Allsops Close
* End-terraced house
* One double bedroom with walk-in wardrobe * Kitchen with oven, hob & hood * Bathroom with shower over bath
* 1 Car-parking space
* Attractive enclosed rear garden
* DGW & Electric heating
* Available December 2014 * EPC = D

Monthly rent of £395+ application fee
£135 (inc VAT) 1st tenant and £100 (inc VAT) each additional tenant.
Deposit required 6 weeks rent.

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Hot hatch is a crazy riot

By James Parker

Take one Fiat 500, add a crazy turbocharged engine, spicy bodykit and wait for the fireworks. Fiat's evergreen 500 has been turned into a fire-breathing hot hatch before by legendary firm Abarth, but the latest version is now a permanent addition to the range.

Available in semi-sensible Turismo or the 100 per cent barmy Competitzione guise tested here, the Abarth 500 is not for the faint of heart.

There's a turbocharged 1.4-litre petrol unit up front that offers a healthy 158bhp but more significantly 170lb.ft of torque. The exterior wears a seriously tough bodykit and gorgeous alloy wheel options, while there's stiffer suspension and uprated brakes too. There's some interesting touches inside too, such as the attractive metal-topped gearlever.

It's hard not to love the Abarth 500's looks, even though from some angles it is almost comically pumped up.

From a rational point of view, it has the proportions of a roller-skate, with a short wheelbase, big wheels and a minimal ride height, but it just makes you want to get in and drive it.

Any notion that the standard 500 is a car 'just for girls' is dismissed in a flash when it's turned into an Abarth. Those in the know recognise the badge and those that don't are intrigued.

Don't forget that the Abarth is still a city car, however much its transformation has rendered it better suited to the open road.





'Drive the 595 in the manner it deserves and you'll revel in the gloriously torquey engine, the raucous exhaust note and the way in which it dives into bends.'

So up front there is a respectable amount of space for adults but the driving position is better suited to those under six feet in height. In the rear it's kids or adults who are willing, rather than pure luxury.

This particular 595 had the optional leather bucket seats, which are terrifically supportive and look superb. In fact it's very easy to be carried away with the options list, especially when the end result is so much fun.

Drive the 595 in the manner it deserves and you'll revel in the gloriously torquey engine, the raucous exhaust note and the way in which it dives into bends with limitless enthusiasm. It's a car that works best when you chuck it about rather than use a delicate hand. Do so and it's a complete riot, as well as remarkably quick. Turn down the wick and it's a little more like hard work. The great handling comes from the stiff suspension which means bumps are

There's actually quite a bit of competition at this price level, and on the one hand the 595 Competitzione is far from cheap.

However, it does come with a lot of kit too; items like Xenonheadlights and the glorious exhaust system are all standard.

Go mad with the options list and you can break the £20k mark.

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The above fuel consumption figures are based on an EU test for comparative purposes only and may not reflect real driving results. *Model shown: Swift SZ4 available from £12,199 (Metallic paint available at £430). *VAT free offer on Swift range: Swift 1.2 SZ2 3dr available from £8,999, including a customer saving of £1,800 to Swift 1.2 SZ4 5dr 4x4 available at £13,699 including customer saving of £2,740 which is equivalent to the VAT amount of the previous on the road price of £10,799 (SZ2 3dr) and £16,439 (SZ4 5dr 4x4). VAT Free offer excludes Swift Sport. *Model shown: SX4 SZ5 available from £13,249 (Metallic paint available at £430). *VAT free offer on SX4 range: SX4 1.6 SZ3 available from £10,495, including customer saving of £2,100 to SX4 SZ5 4x4 available at £13,249 including customer saving of £2,650 equivalent to VAT amount of previous on the road price of £12,595 (1.6 SZ3) and £15,899 (1.6 SZ5 4x4). *Model shown: Splash SZ4 available from £9,899 (Metallic paint available at £415). *VAT free offer on Splash range: Splash 1.0 SZ2 available from £7,999, including customer saving of £1,600 to Splash 1.2 SZ4 A/T available at £10,645 including customer saving of £2,129 equivalent to VAT amount of previous on the road price of £9,599 (SZ2) and £12,774 (SZ4 A/T). *Model shown: Alto SZ4 available from £7,999 (Metallic paint available at £399). *VAT free offer on Alto range: Alto 1.0 SZ available from £5,999, including customer saving of £1,200 to Alto 1.0 SZ4 A/T available at £8,625 including customer saving of £1,724 equivalent to VAT amount of previous on the road price of £7,199 (SZ) and £10,349 (SZ4 A/T). VAT equivalent reduction is not available on vehicle options or accessories. VAT Free offer excludes Swift Sport. For full details contact your local participating Suzuki Dealer. Offer subject to availability for vehicles privately registered between 1st October 2014 to 31st December 2014 from participating Authorised Suzuki Dealers only. Offer cannot be used in conjunction with any other offers. All prices and specifications correct at time of going to print.

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Convertible is practical and good day-to-day

By Bob Hickman

Who can doubt that over the last few years the Audi car company has moved onwards in huge leaps and bounds and been challenging other German car manufacturers to be placed as the Number 1 premium car manufacturer.

The range has grown dramatically to over 40 derivatives of the vehicle that carry the fourcircular rings as its logo. With the A3, Audi has effectively invented the small compact segment and with huge sales in the UK alone, it was only a matter of time before a further derivative arrived and the cabriolet appeared on the scene.

As with all manufacturers, to stand still is to commit suicide and now the A3 has received a further makeover to enhance its already pleasant and appealing features. Audi already has the A5 and TT Roadster in its stable but with the A3 it now has a compact four seater convertible. It gives a sporty driving experience that is also functional for everyday use. It also enables accessibility for those whose budgets may not extent to the somewhat larger A5 or the space restricted TT.

The designers have looked carefully at the A3 and the new version is as you would expect slightly larger than the vehicle it replaces and this translates in to more passenger space and a little bit more possible practicality in the interior. Audi has appeared to have adopted the philosophy of if something is not broken then let's not try and repair it and there is a huge similarity between the previous vehicle and the new incumbent.

There is a mixture from the part's bin as is understandable and the vehicle now has a longer bodywork that has changed quite considerably at the rear, behind the roof section. One noticeable change is the implementation of the high level brake lights that are now on the leading edge of the boot lid. One thing that Audi did look carefully at with the original A3, and this has been continued with the new vehicle, is its handling and its loss of rigidity due to the roof being removed. The engineers have strengthened the A pillars, sills, bulkhead and the floor, by the utilization of high tensile steel and because these features are low in the vehicle the centre of gravity remains lower and this enhances the handling dynamics.

Roof

With the A3 Audi has continued with the use of canvas for the roof, avoiding the tin top versions. The thermal and acoustics features of this fabric roof are just as good as being in a conventional saloon and it is somewhat difficult to differentiate between driving a soft top and a hard one. This is down to the insulation and also the closeness of the fit and the quality of the machines utilised. The roof folds in to an area all of its own that does sadly encroach slightly in to the boot space as it needs a device to lower a section of the boot so as not to crush articles when it's used. That having been said the boot is reasonably generous and the opening aperture is narrow but it makes up for this by being wide. One feature with the roof that is quite incredible and during our test period I actually did try it out due to the inclement weather, is the facility to put the roof back in to place whilst travelling at up to 30 mph. I was pessimistic that this might work and was concerned that with the roof raised it would give the appearance of a sail and could possibly be damaged. But at 20 mph it worked effectively and we were cocooned in warmth and avoided the heavy rain storm that developed.

Audi has continued with their tradition of badging them as a Standard, Sport and S-line. The choice of engines is betwixt petrol and diesel with a diminutive 1.2 TFi producing 105 bhp as the entry level and my particular test vehicle the Sport, was equipped with the 2-litre 140 bhp diesel. This produces a low 110 kgs of CO2 which is going to put it in to the lower category for excise duty.

The performance from the extremely pleasant 2-litre diesel was sufficient to give a potential top speed of 139 mph; the 0-60 gallop could be achieved in marginally under 9 seconds. Audi claim 67.3 mpg on the combined cycle and during my week with the vehicle and over 500 miles, I managed to achieve 50.7 mpg according to the computer fitted.

From an ownership, driving perspective the A3 had a sharp steering and felt dynamically secure in most conditions. With the roof down there was quite a considerable amount of buffeting but with the rear wind deflector in place this reduced this to a more than acceptable level and made the vehicle extremely comfortable. Two negatives with the wind deflector, however. It makes the vehicle a two seater car, as it completely takes over the rear. The other big criticism is how anybody can justify £290 for a bit of tube and some netting.

A3 cabriolets are available from £20,915 for the 1.2-litre petrol and the top of the range 2-litre petrol S-line, will set you back £28,790. My 2-litre TDi Sport was priced at £27,820.

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DRIVETIME



Tesla now in the Midlands

Electric car maker Tesla continues its expansion in the UK with the launch of a new West Midlands-based store and six 'Supercharger' re-charging points.

A five-minute drive from A45 and A38, the Tesla Birmingham retail and service centre in Digbeth is the firm's fourth UK store.

By the end of 2014, customers will be able to visit Tesla stores and service centres across the country. The company is currently recruiting for upcoming sales and service facilities in Manchester, Bristol, Newcastle and Edinburgh.

The company also continues to expand its charging network, with six Supercharging sites now open.

In London, three new Supercharging sites at Canary Wharf, Tower Bridge and Westfield White City add to locations at Portman Square and Royal Victoria Docks.

As well as Tesla's existing site in Birmingham, the company has added Reading, Bristol and Edinburgh to its network. Within the next six months, the company claims Model S drivers will be able to drive the length of the UK relying only on Superchargers.

Commenting on the company's progress, Georg Ell, Tesla's country director for the UK and Ireland, said: "We are working on additional London locations with new sites to be announced shortly. Our plan for routes around the UK is also under way and we now have four locations outside of the capital."



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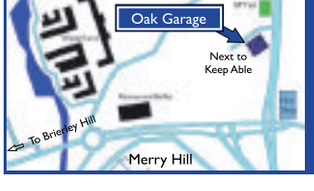
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5 Business & Farming

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6 Property

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07460 374249

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VAUXHALL CORSA SXi, 09 Reg, MoT, 36,500 miles, silver, £3,300 o.n.o. 01922 409284.

VW GOLF 2013, TDi, bluemotion, 14,000 miles, white, good condition. £15,995. 07969 558684.

VW POLO 1.2E 56 reg, red, 5-dr, 67K, PAS, CD, CL, park camera, MoT, history / just serviced, £3,200. 01384 258061. 07759 237779.

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£1,100.
07803 259906.

JAGUAR X TYPE, 2002, 130k miles, blue, long MoT, full spec, good condition, drives well, £750. 07960 838833.

MAZDA 6 2004, petrol, FSH, 86k, MoT Aug 15, good condition, lady owner. £1,200 ono. 07927 402159 or 01215203151.

NISSAN PRIMERA Saloon, 1.8 petrol, 2003, 74,000 miles, 12 months MoT, genuine reason for sale, £1,150. 01902 336263.

PEUGEOT 106 1.1L XL Independence, blue, MoT Sept 2015. Ideal first car, 1997, P reg, £395. 01902 655895 or 07785 130200.

PEUGEOT 206 Estate, 1.4, 90k, 05 reg, MoT, A/C, PAS, CD, 1 lady owner. Excellent condition. £1,275. 07429 999105.

PEUGEOT 206 STATION WAGON SXi
52 plate, 59,000 miles, 12 months MoT, new clutch and tyres, excellent condition.
£1,200.
07772 337190.

PEUGEOT 206 VERVE 1.4
06 reg. 3dr. Red. 67k. 6 months MoT. Two keys. Air Con. Alloys. Parrot Hands Free. Part service history. Nice car.
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07850 113660.

PEUGEOT 306 LX, red, 1.4 petrol, MoT Feb 2015, 94k, good condition £450. Perton 07939 511813.

PEUGEOT 307 HDI DIESEL, (04), black, long MoT, fsh. Beautiful condition, £1,250. 07867 685569.

ROVER 25 2004, MoT September 2015, 68,000 miles, new cambelt, gold, good condition / runner. £600 ono. 07896 761908.

VAUXHALL ASTRA 02 reg, 1600cc, 67,500 miles, spares or repair. £350 ono. 07773 306712.

VW BEETLE 2.0, 2000, service history, green, new cam belt, MoT Feb, dent on sill, £700 ono. 01902 732193 or 07475 638786.

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VIXEN 125 VX Supermoto, 10 plate, MoT'd, £675 ono. 01902 498020.

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10 Personals

personal



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Photo appreciated (returned).
Box Number P19596 , Express and Star, Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES.

GENTLEMAN 60
Slim, single, very good sense of humour, caring nature, no ties, like walks, sport, meals out, nights in and out, light smoker, WLTM slim lady similar age for hopefully long term relationship for sharing life and being there for each other.
Genuine replies only please.
Box Number P19586 , Express and Star, Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES.

GENUINE GENTLEMAN
Likes good company, cinema, eating in and out, clubbing, bowling, gardening, walking, with a good sense of humour. Seeking a lady, any age, for friendship maybe more.
Box Number P19580 , Express and Star, Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES.

I AM A 69 YEAR OLD WIDOW
5ft tall of medium build, looking for a gentleman between 60 and 70 to share my life with. Must be car driver and non smoker.
I have my OHAC and initially looking for Friendship with Relationship later on if compatible. I live in the Sedgley area and would appreciate a photograph.
Box Number P19582 , Express and Star, Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES.

I'M GOING FISHING . . .
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Gent, early 50's, 5ft 9in, n/s, own house, own cars, lives in local village, wants to attract a lady for great activities in life, along with nights in/out, country walks and holidays.
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X
Box Number P19590, Express and Star, Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES.

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general

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Making Friends



Women seeking men

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JULIE loving, caring, honest, seeks real gent to share conversation and have a great time, friendship/relationship, who knows? **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412777**

SOPHIA young 40yrs, married but bored, seeks discreet adult fun, any area, all calls answered. **Tel No: 0905 002 1883 Box No: 413399**

SALLY stunning lady looking for dinner dates, partying and generally having a good time with generous man looking for his mojo! No strings, go on call me. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412599**

LUCY, 32yrs, blonde lady seeks naughty boys of any age for no strings fun. **Tel No: 0905 002 1887 Box No: 413443**

DEBS petite attractive auburn haired, good listener, romantic, enjoys socialising, cosy nights in with Mr Right, seeking similar caring N/S single dad. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412387**

KAREN, 42yrs, attractive and broadminded, seeks no strings fun with chap any age, must be discreet. **Tel No: 0905 002 1891 Box No: 407953**

JAN slim curvy professional warm, affectionate, looking to fill full time vacancy with similar male who loves cuddles/kisses and bikes for romance. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412167**

JANE, 40s, tall, blonde leggy lady, honest and keen to meet gent for fun times. I can make you happy! **Tel No: 0905 002 1895 Box No: 361745**

ATTRACTIVE slim brunette, 47, N/S, seeks tall, slim male for a cut above the average relationship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412725**

ADVENTUROUS sexy lady, 38yrs, married but seeks no strings fun with discreet man, any age. I'm tall, slim and dominant. Aca. **Tel No: 0905 002 1937 Box 415301**

KAREN pretty blonde, short in stature, big personality, keeps fit, loves dogs, seeking honest, caring male who can make me laugh. Nothing too serious just fun. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412377**

SALLY, 38yrs large cuddly lady seeks slim men for discreet meetings. **Text Only 4550193**

JEAN petite female who enjoys golf, days out, cosy evenings in, holidays, WLTM older male in his 60's with a good personality and big heart. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412359**

TRUDY 36yrs, wltm broadminded men of any age/area for daytime meetings. **Text Only 4550194**

JULIE really fun loving slim pretty female 38 looking for nice guy to go out with, get to know and hopefully enjoy a relationship with. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 411517**

MELANIE, 38, slim, blonde and bored. Call if you want no strings fun. **Text Only 4550198**

GWENDOLINE honest, trustworthy, seeks caring gent who enjoys cinema, theatre, holidays and nights out for friendship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412293**

JENNI, 52 bored housewife wants no strings fun with younger chap. **Text Only 4550197**

DIANE voluptuous curvy and all woman, loves dancing, walking, cosy nights in, WLTM nice man for friendship, hopefully leading to something more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412321**

SARA bored blonde looking for single gents for fun, chats and meets, looking forward to hearing from you, don't be shy. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412055**

EMMA petite young looking 31yr old attractive single brunette, loves walking, talking, music, seeks honest romantic 30-40yrs. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412037**

ANNABELL 29 slim sophisticated well travelled interesting sensual fit brunette with lots to offer seeks older male to appreciate and treat me well. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412177**

KAREN slim, tall, attractive 36yr old normal female who likes shopping, socialising, nights in/out seeking thoughtful genuine male. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412041**

KIM 25yrs feminine, pretty, big blue eyes, GSOH, varied interests, likes romantic beach walks, cosy nights in, seeking honest loving man for ltr. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 411777**

CAROL young 47, caring, loyal, likes music, concerts, cinema, theatre, seeks male with similar interests for fun times. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 411919**

PROFESSIONAL black lady, likes cooking, music, countryside, seeking honest, reliable gent, possibly farmer for friendship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 411763**

VICKY 37yr professional, mum to one, sensual and very attractive, looking for a real man, tall, fit, sincere and passionate to enjoy each other's company. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 411695**

LUCY beautiful busty bubbly blonde 32yrs, seeking naughty boy to enjoy the fun side of life with, age, status and looks unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 411691**

LINDA single and living alone, attractive, young looking, bubbly, WLTM similar young at heart companion to be close with, enjoy chats and romantic dates. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 410119**

WIDOW 68, 5ft 5ins, medium build, attractive, likes walks, reading, holidays, seeks sincere, N/S male. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 411745**

Men seeking women

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KEVIN 53, looking for a friend/partner and a lover. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412869**

JAMES, hard working single dad, late 30's seeks single mum for family days out. **Text Only 4550196**

NORTH Shropshire male, 67, N/S, solvent, GSOH, likes walks, travel, music, holidays, countryside, seeks N/S lady for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412867**

JOHN, 42yrs professional genuine gent seeks caring lady to treat as a princess. **Text Only 4550195**

MAURICE gentleman, 59, gentle, kind, caring, loving, generous, seeks lady with GSOH and similar personality, slim-medium build. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412859**

MALE seeking female companion for outings, friendship and holidays. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412705**

STEPHEN 58, good looking, likes art, travel, seeking female, 50 plus for companionship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412633**

MALCOLM 61, smoker, great personality, likes coach holidays, drives, pubs, meals out, nights out, 60's music, seeks female. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412523**

TALL attractive Shrewsbury male, 54, seeks attractive female for fun and excitement in the daytime. Discretion assured. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 411823**

TONY 52, dark hair, white male, 6ft, confident, GSOH, seeks black female. Genuine ad. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412481**

TALL 42yr old sincere male, caring, honest, loving, seeking female, 30-40 for fun, friendship and good times. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412483**

COUNTRY loving businessman, honest, medium build, N/S, OHAC, seeks professional, genuine, caring, honest, N/S female for loving relationship, 45-55. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412445**

ALAN tall widower, 76, looking for female of similar age who enjoys meals out, holidays, walks and holidays. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412261**

ROY mid 60's, N/S, car driver, young outlook, seeks lady for friendship. West Bromwich area. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412083**

MALE 74, fit, N/S, OHAC, seeks slim lady of similar age for days out, holidays and walks. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 411673**

TALL slim gent, 60, seeks slim, attractive lady for no strings relationship. Discretion assured. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412227**

IAN 65, romantic, likes to wine/dine, days out, seeking younger female for relationship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412087**

MARK fun loving, easy going, fair hair blue eyes, athletic, tanned, looking for good times. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 411989**

FIT bubbly male, athletic, blue eyes, short fair hair, easy going, loving, GSOH, seeking female for no strings fun. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 411901**

PHIL genuine male, 57, OHAC, looking for female, any race, status and age for no strings discreet fun. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 411461**

DEE 49, divorced, handsome, fit, slim, seeks lady, any age for lasting, meaningful relationship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 411415**

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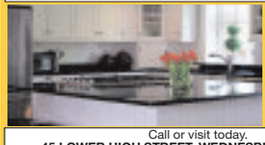
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Visting Yeltz in Trafford shutout

Trafford 0 Halesowen 2

A professional performance gave Halesowen all three points in Manchester.

The opening chance came from Halesowen, as Danny Bragoli picked up the ball from the edge of the area, and smashed the ball towards goal, but Dan Wilczynski made a brilliant save to deny him.

Trafford had their chances as well in the first half, as captain forced Matt Sargeant into making a good save, and Mile Oates created a chance for himself but he could only blast the ball over the bar.

The Yeltz took the lead on 65 minutes, as Iyseden Christie slotted the ball through the Trafford defence to Kristian Green, who scored.

Halesowen doubled their lead in the final moments of the game, as Robert Thompson Brown made and individual run and ended it with comfortably placing the ball into the net. The Yeltz move up the table once again, as their progress moves them up to 15th.

Halesowen: Sargeant, Green, Griffiths, Forde, Hull, Tilt, Kettle (Tonks), Bragoli (Mackenzie), Christie, Haseley (Thompson-Brown), Turner.

Unused Subs: Robinson, Lait.

Draw stems run of losses for Men's Firsts

Stone 2 OHHC 1sts 2

Hockey

OLD Halesonians Hockey Club Men's 1st XI losing streak came to an end, albeit with a draw, as they gained a well-earned point away to Stone Hockey Club.

Hales, who had suffered in previous weeks, came out fighting in this match and were much improved as they looked calm and collected when they were on the ball.

The visitors dominated the early periods of the game, with several chances falling to the strikers who were unable to convert to get their side on the score sheet.

Hales were not rattled however, and stuck to their game plan which soon paid off when Tom Bulteel struck home to make it 1-0.

Stone did reply by throwing players forward, and through this were able to draw the scores level before the half time break.

In the second half, Hales continued with their strategy using their counter attacking and progressive play.

Chances were far and few between in the second half, but a string of penalty corners which were cleared by the Stone defence, were soon to be their shortfall. Tom Bulteel converted to score his second goal of the game, and to give Hales the lead once more.

Old Hales continued to try and extend their lead, but found it difficult to do so.

What would have been an excellent performance from Hales was tainted when Stone equalised for the second time, with just minutes of the game left to play.

Hales were pleased with their improved performance which stemmed the tide of losses they had faced, and coach Simon Palmer was unable to find any negative points in the post-game team talk.

This week, Hales face top of the league side, Stourport starting 1.30pm at Ormiston Forge Academy.

Other Results: OHHC Ladies 1sts 2 Stourport 3. The goalscorers were Annie Smith and Dawn Lewis.

OHHC 2nds 3 Stourport 3. The goalscorers in this match were Adam Hill, Matt Cole and Mark Rigby.

Bloxwich 2 OHHC 3rds 0

OHHC 4ths 1 Stourport 7

Hampton 7 OHHC 5ths 1. The lone goalscorer this time was Fady Jadayel.

Wednesbury 0 OHHC Badgers3. Goals came from Josh Wells, Eve Willetts and Joe Shackleton.

First goal was lethal for Albion, says boss

BAGGIES boss Alan Irvine believes Chelsea's controversial opening goal spoiled his team's chances of pulling off a shock defeat at Stamford Bridge.

Irvine's men went down 2-0 to the Premier League leaders and had Claudio Yacob sent off but Irvine was upset by the award of Chelsea's opener, with replays suggesting scorer Diego Costa was fractionally offside when Oscar delivered the cross.

"We could have been a little bit more on the front foot from the front but the game was really just settling down, I felt," said Irvine, who defended the performance of his players.

"Then obviously we lost the first goal and that rocked us. That made a difficult task even more difficult."

"What we have to do is look at that game and take the positives out of it.

"There aren't lots and lots of positives, obviously, but we can certainly be pleased that we played for so long with 10 men and didn't cave in. So mentally there are a lot of positives.

"Ben Foster was terrific.

"It's the most he's had to do this season by a long way," said Irvine.

Old Hales push for a spot in top three

Burton 15 Old Halesonians 32

HALES went to bottom side Burton hoping for a win to push for a place in the top three.

Rugby

Burton had other ideas from the kick off and the muddy conditions were not conducive to open running rugby. After 14 minutes Hales infringed in kicking range and the home side took the lead 3-0. Hales could not find their rhythm and put little phase play together.

It took 30 minutes for Hales to take control, Chris Hooper supporting brothers Carl and Andy Robinson in the centre for a break and try which he converted 3 - 7.

Hales started to put some plays together with back row Tom Jordan. Nigel Burrows and Jay Martin leading the way.

Scrum Half Nathan Jones and Matt Williams outside provided good ball but Burton were able to contain the attacks.

On 23 minutes the visiting pack took possession. Jones fed to C.Robinson who passed to Hooper who again found a gap to give to wing Luke Smith a great try, Hooper converted.

The rest of the half saw chances go begging but still phases were not carried out as practised by the visitors.

The second half saw a bit more effort by Hales to take control in attack with Tom Dempsey, Martin and Jordan making the hard yards. Pressure forced Burton to infringe, penalty converted by Hooper 3 - 17.

From the kick off Hales again drove forward with the Robinsons and replacement wing Paddy Luftkin penetrating in the backs. On 54 minutes the ball was moved from the breakdown to Williams to Jordan who sprinted through a gap in the opposition backs to score a well-worked try.

Hales continued with the pressure and after 70mins forwards and backs combined well, Nathan Jones took the initiative and sprinted through a gap to score.

Burton came back and despite heroic defending by the visitors they scored a well-deserved converted try. Six minutes later Hales again gained possession.

Hooper, standing in at scrum half for injured Jones, fed the backs, debutant wing Paddy Luftkin who gathered the ball. He took on the opposition, kept his feet and evaded tacklers to score.

Although the visitors were strong they still were not in a commanding position. On the 80th minute Burton again came back and with a lapse in defence Hales allowed a last try by the home side for the final score.

This Saturday Old Halesonians play Newport at home kick off 2.15pm.

Whiley is setting her sights on NEC Masters



Tennis champion Jordane Whiley came runner up in the Nottingham Indoor tournament over the weekend

HALESOWEN'S Jordanne Whiley completed her preparations for the coming week's NEC Wheelchair Tennis Masters by finishing runner-up in the women's singles on Sunday at the Nottingham Indoor, just 24 hours after lifting the women's doubles title with fellow Brit Lucy Shuker.

World No.6 Whiley, the 2010 Nottingham Indoor champion, was beaten 6-0, 6-4 by Dutch world No.2 Jiske Griffioen in the singles final, but is buoyed by her second set comeback heading into the year-end singles championship for the world's leading players, which begins on Wednesday in Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, London.

"I did well in the second set and brought it back a little bit, but I couldn't find my rhythm," said Whiley, who will go to the Masters bidding to progress beyond the round-robin phase of the competition for the second successive year. She became the first Brit to reach the women's singles semi-finals at the prestigious event in 2013.

"It wasn't my day and Jiske was on fire. But I know I can beat her, I've beaten her before and I'm really excited to be heading back to the venue where I won my London 2012 doubles bronze medal for the Masters at the end of what's been a memorable season."

Certainly not Nirvana for Gornal

Thurnby Nirvana 4
Gornal 1

GORNAL'S hopes of a good FA Vase run vanished as they lost 4-1 to in-form United Counties side Thurnby Nirvana.

Despite a promising start, Athletic found themselves a goal down on eight minutes when Eddy Samba beat keeper Rich Kennedy at the second attempt.

Gornal's Tim Piggott spurned a great chance to equalise before Thurnby doubled their lead on 31 minutes through Ashley Day.

The hosts made the game safe on 65 minutes through Reece Moore . Matt Melbourne then celebrated Thurnby's fourth before Geoff Hill's consolation.

Clarke aims to end year with a bang

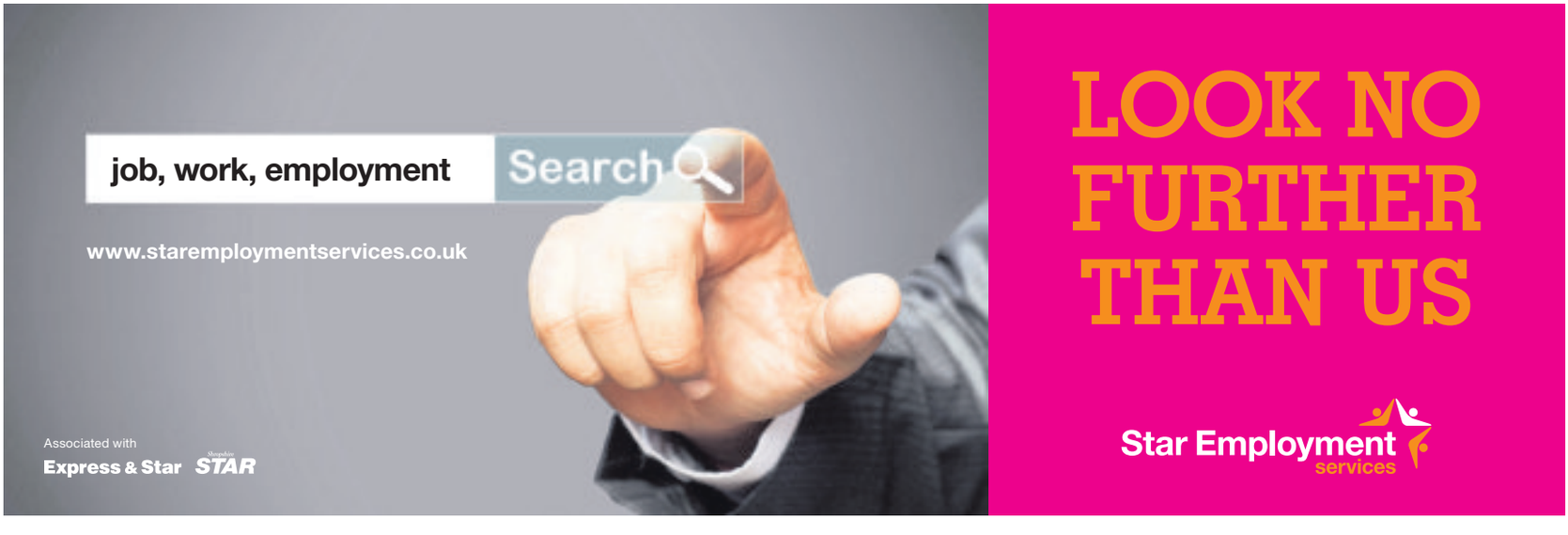
LENNOX Clarke is hoping to finish the year with a bang when he takes on Jamie Ambler at Walsall Town Hall.

The undefeated super middleweight has enjoyed a prosperous 2014.

The Halesowen boxer has recorded three victories in 2014 so far, taking his ledger to 5-0 including back-to-back first round knock-outs in his last two outings in the ring.

Next weekend, the 23 year-old takes on durable Welshman, Ambler, on Black Country Boxing's 'Bad Blood In The Black Country' show.

Tickets are £30 and £50 Ringside and available from Walsall Town Hall Box Office on 0845 111 2900.



Stour are brought down by Barwell

Stourbridge 0 Barwell 2

STOURBRIDGE went down 2-0 at home to Barwell in the Evo-Stik Premier clash.

After the highs of beating FC United in front of more than 1,000 on Saturday, the come down came against a side they would have expected to beat .

The visitors took the lead on 23 minutes when Anthony Carney followed up a ball from midfield which Stourbridge's defence failed to deal with and held off a challenge to put the ball home, though Dean Coleman got a hand to the ball.

After the break Stourbridge showed more urgency and Kristian Ramsey-Dickson put the ball over on 46 minutes when it was easier to score.

Then on 57 minutes, Kyle Hayne's low cross was only parried by goalkeeper Liam Castle and Kayelden Brown was on the spot but put his shot over as well.

Barwell made it two on 61 minutes when Alex Tomkinson produced a brilliant thundering volley which came off the bottom of the bar and Nigel Julian eventually collected it and put his shot past Coleman.

Stourbridge fought back, Ramsey-Dickson putting a shot just wide but they looked a shadow of the team who played on Saturday.

Letford goal is a winner

Dudley Sports 2
W-ton Casuals 1

TWO second-half goals in the space of five minutes earned Dudley Sports victory over Wolverhampton Casuals.

In a scrappy West Midlands Premier game, Casuals went ahead in the 23rd minute when Daniel Westwood headed down an Angelo Franco cross for Scott Embrey to score from eight yards.

Just before the goal Lewis Cooper made a great run in to the Sports area only to see his shot well saved by Sports keeper Dominic Richards.

Sports equalised in the 79th minute when Oliver Staten volleyed a Luke Williams corner past Casuals goalkeeper Steve Booth.

And the hosts' second goal came from Jonathan Letford when his effort went under Booth's body.

Villa get the edge over 10-man Wolves

Wolves U-21s 0 Aston Villa U-21s 1

Football

A SPIRITED second-half comeback from 10-man Wolves wasn't enough as Villa edged a fiercely-fought Premier League Under-21s Cup clash at AFC Telford.

Villa controlled the first half and were good value for Michael Drennan's 38th-minute strike – even before the sending off of Wolves winger Eusebio Bancessi.

The Portuguese wideman saw red for inexplicably attempting to headbutt Villa left-back Lewis Kinsella at a throw-in in the 20th minute. Kinsella carved out two excellent early chances for the visitors. His cross was volleyed wide by Leandro Bacuna at the far post, then Drennan fired wide with only keeper Tomasz Kuszczak to beat.

Villa remained in control and Jerrel Sellars saw a rising volley well held by Kuszczak before Bacuna advanced to side-foot wide from 20 yards.

The impressive Dominic Iorfa and the recalled Kortney Hause did well to keep Villa at bay until the visitors took a deserved lead.

Left-winger Jack Grealish, who ran the show in the first half, released Drennan, who managed to squeeze a low, acute-angled shot past Iorfa and Kuszczak and into the far corner.

But it was a different story after the break as Wolves, driven on by a determined display by Liam McAlinden, went all out to prove the old adage that it's harder to play against 10 men than 11.

Wolves, who brought on Connor Hunte for Keita at half-time, went desperately close on 52 when McAlinden's shot smacked the base of the post from Declan Weeks's cross. McAlinden then sent Hunte through for another drive that went wide.

Drennan was denied a second when Kuszczak saved after Grealish put him through.

Wolves: Kuszczak; Matinyadze (Swan 69), Iorfa, Hause, O'Hanlon; Weeks, Torras, Reid; Bancessi, Keita (Hunte HT), McAlinden. Subs not used: Carter, Erdei, Dutton (gk).

Villa: Watkins; Leggett, Herd, Toner, Kinsella; Cowans, Calder, Sellars (Abdo 68); Bacuna, Drennan, Grealish. Subs not used: Wildin, Crooks, Webb, Bannister (gk).

YELTZ FOUR-CED OUT OF THE CUP

Halesowen Town 1 Hednesford Town 4

HALESOWEN were taken out of the Birmingham Senior Cup with a comprehensive beating.

The Pitmen also ended Halesowen's long unbeaten home record.They were soon ahead in the third minute when Paul Sullivan played an exchange of passes.

He then curled a 15-yard shot past home goalkeeper Matt Sargeant in the soaking wet conditions.

But the Yeltz equalised in the 17th minute when Robert Thompson-Brown found space in the Hednesford area and his low shot could only be helped into the net by central defender Ben Bailey.

Halesowen increased the pressure late in the first half when Thompson-Brown's shot was cleared off the line and Elliott Turner's deflected free-kick trickled just wide.

Blistering

A minute before the interval Neil MacKenzie's blistering drive was beaten away by goalkeeper Dan Crane from a free-kick on the edge of the Hednesford penalty area.

At the start of the second half Richie Batchelor's effort was gathered by home goalkeeper Sargeant before the visitors added three more goals.

Jamey Osborne skipped through the home defence to fire the Pitmen back into the lead after 61 minutes.

Substitute Steve Diggin made the tie safe for Hednesford by heading home a 71st minute corner from close range and defender Bailey put the Pitmen out of sight with an almost identical headed fourth goal from another right-wing corner with four minutes left.

Hednesford 2 Tamworth 3

A stoppage-time goal condemned Hednesford to defeat in the Staffordshire derby in the Vanarama North.

Former Tamworth defender Francino Francis headed in an 18th minute corner to give the home side a deserved leadReece Styche then calmly slotted home a penalty. .

A few minutes later Tamworth took the lead through Hibbert when Ben Bailey hesitated for a moment after a quick throw on the right wing and the striker finished well past Crane.

Jamey Osborne finally found some space 30 yards out and played a wonderfully judged ball to release Glover down the left channel and he squared for Alex Melbourne to fire into the net to equalise.

Unfortunately for the Keys Park faithful Tamworth skipper Dan Preston guided in the coffin nail.



Hednesford's Jamey Osborne scores one of the goals which put Yeltz out of the cup

Tividale keep up the wins

Rainworth 1 Tividale 2

TIVIDALE continued their impressive away record with their fourth win on the road in a last-gasp success over Rainworth.

The first half was summed up with the fact neither keeper had a shot to save as both teams failed to create anything. The only incident of note was Rainworth skipper Emeka Nwadike having to go off with a cut under his eye .

Rainworth had the first effort on goal at the start of the second period when Charlie Price had to touch over a dipping free-kick from Theo Brown on 47 minutes.

That was the end of the action until the introduction of new Tividale signing Roland Agbor on the hour.

On 83 minutes he brilliantly back-heeled home a Danny Ashton cross to break the deadlock.

And in the second minute of injury time Agbor's right-wing cross was headed home at the back post by Leigh Downing.

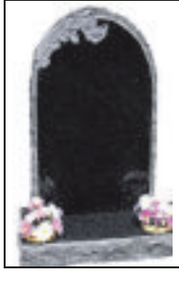
Rainworth did get on the score sheet in the fifth minute of injury time when Brown made no mistake giving Price no chance.

Freddie is back as Wolves rider

SPEEDWAY ace Freddie Lindgren set his sights on the play-offs after sealing a return to Wolves.

The popular 29-year-old Swede's return to Monmore, following a year away, was confirmed on Monday at the club's winter talk-in with fans. Lindgren first raced for Wolves in 2003 as a 17-year-old.

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